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K A I N A K A I Π Α Λ Α Ι Α :

SACRED CONTEMPLATIONS: IN THREE PARTS.

- I. A VIEW of the COVENANT of WORKS; in its NATURAL STATE, as common to all Mankind,—and in its POSITIVE STATE, as peculiar to our First Parents: Discovering the SINGULAR GOODNESS of GOD, in that POSITIVE STATE.
- II. A VIEW of the COVENANT of GRACE; in the ESTABLISHMENT of it from Eternity, the ACCOMPLISHMENT of it in Time, and the EFFECT of it through Eternity.
- III. A VIEW of the ABSOLUTE and IMMEDIATE DEPENDENCE of ALL THINGS on GOD: In a Discourse concerning LIBERTY and NECESSITY.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

A N A P P E N D I X,

Containing EXPLICATIONS of some DIFFICULTIES in the Works:

By A D A M G I B,

MINISTER of the GOSPEL; EDINBURGH.

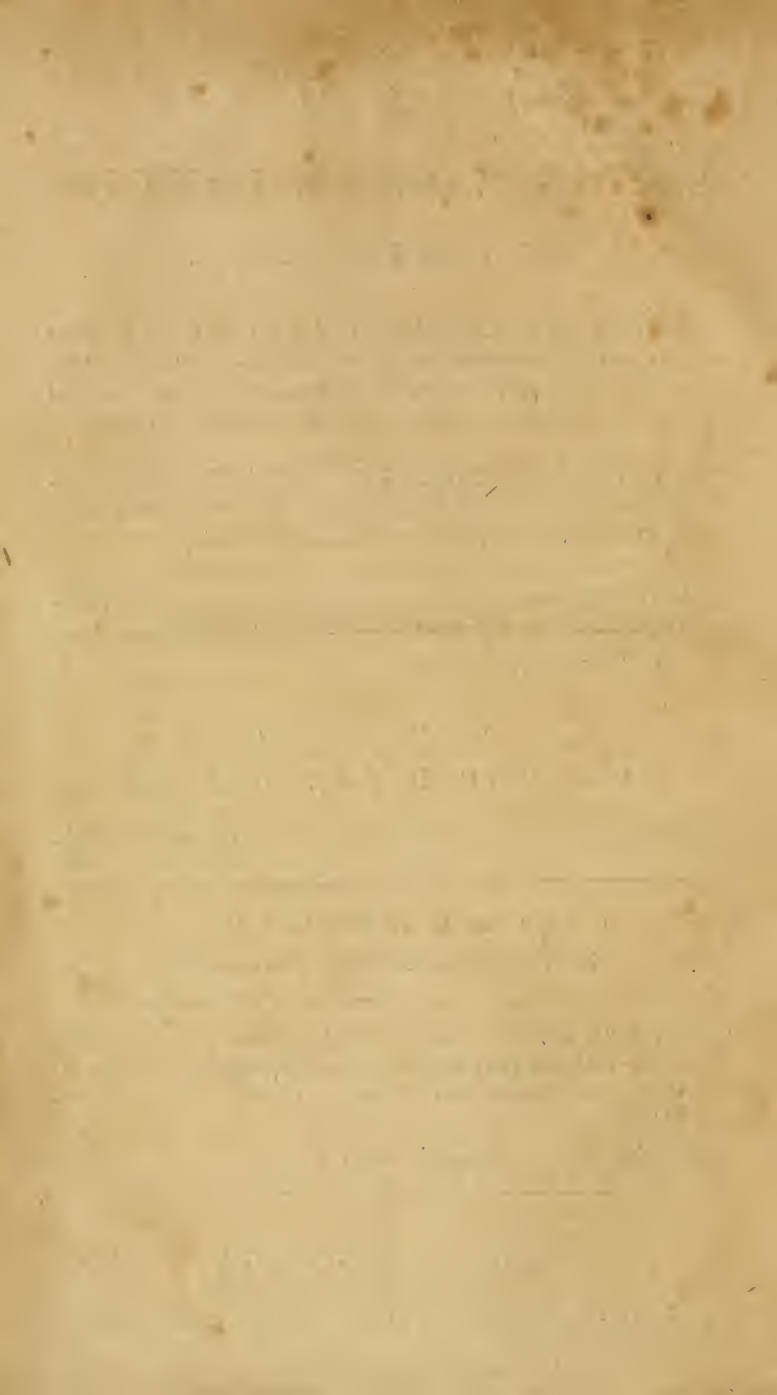
Every Scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven, is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure [K A I N A K A I Π Α Λ Α Ι Α] THINGS NEW AND OLD.
MAT. xiii. 52.

Knowledge shall be increased. DAN. xii. 4.

P H I L A D E L P H I A :

Printed by W. YOUNG and J. M'CULLOCH.

M.DCC.LXXX.VIII.





P R E F A C E.

DURING the long course of my ministry, in a numerous Congregation at EDINBURGH,—under a variety of personal trials, and amidst grievous breakings among those of the same denomination; I have obtained mercy to persevere in the same state of religious principles and profession upon which, having been unanimously called, I was solemnly ordained to that ministry, on the second day of *April* 1741.

I have used my best endeavours all along, through *evil report and good report*, to maintain the cause of the Secession-testimony which I profess; on behalf of the Reformation-principles of the Church of *Scotland*, against the manifold errors and corruptions of the present age.

But I have very seldom entertained my hearers from the pulpit, with any peculiarities of that cause. It has been always my principal, and almost only business there,—to explain and enforce those doctrines and duties which are accounted of among Christians of all denominations; so far as they take the substance of their Christianity from the BIBLE.

The

The present Work is of the same general nature; as it meddles with nothing peculiar to any of those denominations. And I have a particular satisfaction in this providential ordering; that my former appearances before the world, in favour of the special Testimony which I have espoused,—are succeeded by the present appearance, on behalf of the common interests of Christianity.

I have endeavoured to write, as with perspicuity, so with plainness and simplicity; without affecting any modish ornaments of style,—which might not well suit the gravity of the subject, nor the apprehension of common readers.

Beside that some repetitions of the same sentiments were very incident,—when writing at distances of time, in the intervals of other business; it is presumed that none of these will be reckoned vain repetitions: As they are made with new applications and illustrations; or natively occurred for completing the sense, in different parts of the subject.

I make no account of reflections (such as I have met with) about my way of pointing, from its being uncommon. My concern is, that it may be what I reckon just and accurate; properly distinguishing the co-ordinate and subordinate parts of matter in sentences: Of some resemblance, as our language can admit, to the divine accuracy of punctuation (by what are called *accents*) in the Hebrew Bible.

I have

I have introduced two or three material corrections (not originally mine) upon our translation of the holy Bible. But this is very different from the practice of some moderns, who have done despite to the great Prophet of the Church,—on the matter charging him with falshood and imposture [Matth. v. 18.]; while impiously presuming to amend and innovate the received reading of the Hebrew Scriptures.

And here I will set up an EBENEZER,—a monument of thankfulness, that *hitherto hath the LORD helped me*; preserving me in a capacity of body and mind, for accomplishing this Work in my *seventy-third* year: Which I will leave behind me as a summary (especially in the second part) of that Gospel which I have been preaching; and as a testimony for truth, against the present flood of errors,—in opposition likewise to many misapprehensions which generally prevail: Desirous and hopeful that I may be useful by it, after having finished my course.

But, in a particular manner, I mean a speaking thereby to those now under my charge; when they shall no longer hear any thing from the mouth of

Their servant for JESUS' sake,

EDINBURGH, }
Aug. 18. 1786. }

ADAM GIB.

[It may be here added by a friend of the Author, that he died the 18th June 1788; being carried off by the gout in his stomach.]

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[*Note*, The *Appendix* was sent in manuscript, to the printers, after the Author heard that an American edition was proposed to be published.]



SACRED CONTEMPLATIONS:

PART FIRST.

A

V I E W

OF THE

COVENANT OF WORKS:

IN ITS

NATURAL STATE,

AS COMMON TO ALL MANKIND;

AND IN ITS

POSITIVE STATE,

AS PECULIAR TO OUR FIRST PARENTS;

DISCOVERING THE

SINGULAR GOODNESS OF GOD,

IN THAT POSITIVE STATE.

Search the Scriptures.

JOHN v. 39.

Qui Veritatem occultat reus est, qui prodesse non vult.

AUGUSTINUS.

[IN ENGLISH.]

He who conceals the Truth is criminal, because he declines to be profitable.





A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

A CONVERSATION which the Author lately happened to have with a friend, upon some things relative to the subject of the following VIEW,—occasion the design of drawing up his Contemplations upon it in the present form: From whence he was led forward to the other parts of this Work.

His present judgment on that subject, so far as singular, was generally formed above forty years ago; when he knew of none having gone before him in the same way: Nor has he met with any since.

Several indigested and untenable notions, as he apprehends, in the doctrine of some eminent writers on the Covenant of Works,—are here obviated; but not in a controversial manner, and without taking any direct notice of them.

As to what NEW THINGS are taught in this performance,—he is in no difficulty about submitting them to the most critical, if candid examination: Being fully confident that they are well founded in the holy Scriptures, and in the real nature of the subject. An explaining of what necessarily belongs unto, and results from these grounds of argument, is entirely different from a dealing in fanciful conjectures; and from a dipping into those secret things which belong unto the LORD.

The adversaries of divine Revelation, in their perverse disputings, may arraign the Scripture-doctrine of the Covenant of Works,—as if it could not consist with the goodness of God, or what they call the *moral character* of the Deity; that the first man, and all his posterity, should have been exposed to the punishment of eternal death,—for an action so plainly indifferent in its nature, and likewise so insignificant,

insignificant, as an once eating a bit of wholesome and pleasant fruit: As if a doctrine of such despotic rigour and severity, were quite unworthy of, yea reproachful to the infinite goodness of God. But it is conceived that an infallible antidote may be afforded, against the poison of such deistical reflections; by the present display of a *most singular goodness and condescension*, in God's making the eternal state of mankind to turn upon the hinge of the positive precept about the fruit of a certain tree: Much more favourable, than if it had been left to turn upon the moral law, or the law of nature at large; or even upon the most important and essential precept thereof,—a transgression of which would have been the most shocking wickedness in its nature, that could have been proposed by Satan and perpetrated by man.

And this publication cannot be but very seasonable; when the fashionable teachers are come the length of denying that there ever was a *Covenant of Works*, a covenant with the first man as the head and representative of his posterity!

SACRED

A
V I E W
OF THE
COVENANT OF WORKS, &c.

THE light of nature, in the common dictates of reason, serves to determine,—that this world could not have made itself: And that neither the matter nor form of it could have been from eternity, in a succession of revolutions and generations; but must have had a beginning. Yet our knowledge of the period and manner in which this *beginning* took place, is wholly derived from *revelation*; particularly in the first chapter of *Genesis*.

It is likewise evident to reason, that God could not have made man such a corrupt creature as he is now. But the uprightness and speciality of his primitive estate, with the origin of *moral evil* in his fall, could not have been known by us,—otherwise than from the revelation which is made thereof, in the first three chapters of *Genesis*. And this is the subject now proposed to some particular examination.

CHAPTER I.

A general VIEW of the COVENANT of WORKS, as exhibited in

GENESIS ii. 16, 17.

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying ; Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it : For in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.

S E C T. I.

A Division and Explication of these Words.

THE passage now quoted contains the whole account which *Moses* hath given, of God's dealing with the first man in a *Covenant of Works*; a very short description of an establishment which, in its original state, was of a very short duration.

We have, in these words, a *Right* which God granted unto the first man; and a *Restriction* under which he granted it.

§ I. A *Right* which God granted unto the first man: *And the LORD God commanded the man, saying ; Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat.* We may consider the *Author*, *object*, *establishment*, and *import* of this grant.

1st, The *Author* of this grant is the LORD God. These are two awful names of the SUPREME BEING. The LORD, in the original JEHOVAH, is a name which belongs to him absolutely and exclusively, as he is in himself; or as he is a BEING eternal, necessarily existent, self-existent, independent, infinite in all perfections,

perfections, and infinitely blessed in himself,—the high Fountain of all finite being, which is necessarily in a state of universal and absolute dependence upon him. *God*, in the original ELOHIM, is a name which belongs to him as an infinitely *adorable BEING*: The absolute Proprietor and Sovereign of the world which he had newly created; and who had made a number of rational creatures for glorifying him in all the proper ways of *adoration*, of the highest worship and most absolute obedience. ELOHIM is the name by which he is mentioned in the first verse of *Genesis*; as the wonderful Creator of that world in which he was to be adored. There, and in the passage now considered, it is a name constructed with verbs of the *singular* number,—*created, commanded*; denoting acts of ONE BEING: And yet the name is of the *plural* number; evidently referring to a *plurality* (a *Trinity*) of persons, most mysteriously subsisting in that ONE BEING or GODHEAD.

2dly, The *object* of this grant was *the Man*: The man whom God had just then made, as the last part of his created work; and the noblest part thereof, in the visible world. He was a very singular part of that work: Composed of a material body; with an immaterial, immortal, and reasonable soul. He was not brought into being, as any of his natural posterity were to be; but immediately by God himself: *The LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul**. He was the *first man*, the natural root of all mankind: The great parent of the innumerable millions of the human race, who have overspread the earth for near six thousand years by-past,—and are yet to be produced upon it, till the restitution of all things; the progenitor *of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues*†. He was made
after

* Gen. ii. 7.

† Rev. vii. 9.

after God's own image; in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness,—with dominion over the other creatures in this lower world.

He was thus a holy man. For (as is well expressed by a divine of the last century *) “ In the
 “ state of innocency, man was created *right* or *up-*
 “ *right*, and *very good* ; endued with such strength
 “ and integrity in all parts, as did wholly dispose
 “ them to all operations conformable to God's will.
 “ His understanding, so far as was needful before
 “ his translation, had a clear apprehension of the
 “ Deity in his nature, attributes and worship; as al-
 “ so of the creatures, in their essence and qualities.
 “ His will embraced and clave fast unto God, whom
 “ Adam knew to be the Author of his being and
 “ happiness. His affections, and all inferior facul-
 “ ties, obeyed, without all resistance, the rule of
 “ reason, and motions of the sanctified will. This
 “ universal holiness and perfection, in the whole
 “ man, was that image of God, or original justice
 “ wherein Adam was created, but continued not.”

He was, accordingly, a man with whom the infinite ONE held a wonderful familiarity and distinctness of intercourse, beyond what we can conceive of; speaking to him as a man doth to his friend, while the man had absolute certainty of the being and truth of the infinite Speaker.—And as the woman was not then formed out of the man, God spake to the woman in the man; so that, upon her distinct formation, he and she were but *one party* in the great transaction now to be considered: GOD *created man in his own image ; in the image of God created he HIM ; male and female created he THEM* †.

3dly, The *establishment* of this grant is in the word *commanded*. The original word, so translated, doth not

* William Pemble, in his *Vindiciæ Gracie*, p. 4, 5.

† Gen. i. 27.

not merely signify a simple act of *enjoining* a duty : But it farther signifies an expression of the divine will in *appointing, ordaining, constituting* or *establishing* a thing. Thus it is used to denote God's appointing, ordaining, or constituting of *judges* over Israel* ; and of *David* to be king in Israel† : As also to denote God's *establishing* of his *covenant* of grace‡. And the original language, in the passage before us, naturally leads to this sense of the word here : For it literally signifies, God commanded *upon the man*. Now, though it is proper to say, that God *commanded the man*, and that a *command* was thus laid *upon the man* ; yet it is not proper language to say, that God *commanded upon the man*,—but that he constituted or *established upon the man*. The meaning, therefore, is plainly this,—that God now made a constitution or *establishment upon* or concerning *the man* : An establishment of a right which, under its covenant-restriction, was of the greatest importance, to be of a standing nature and effect,—with regard to the whole human kind.

4thly, As to the *import* of this right granted unto, and established upon the man ; we are informed *about what*, and *for what* it was.

1. About what it was : *Every tree of the garden*. God had put the man into the *garden of Eden*, or (as the word signifies) *of pleasure* ; a type of the heavenly *paradise*,—in which there is *fulness of joy* and *pleasure for evermore*. God had planted this garden, certainly in a most delightful situation ; and, as we may well suppose, of an order and beauty far excelling all human plantations. *And out of the ground, in that garden, made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.*
And

* 2 Sam. vii. 11. ; 1 Chron. xvii. 10.
2 Sam. vi. 21. † Psal. cxi. 9.

† 1 Sam. xiii. 14. ;

And the trees were then loaded with their various and pleasant fruits, in a state of ripeness; the beginning of the world's time, or of its first year, appearing to have been the autumn,—the time of *ripe fruits*.

2. For what it was : *Saying*, Of every tree of the garden *thou mayest freely eat*. The man had an animal life, which was to be sustained by food. The trees of the garden, in great variety, and on every side, exhibited and offered to him their ripe fruits; *fruits pleasant to the sight and good for food*, most delicious and nourishing food : And food which was to cost him no toilsome labour for procuring it ; he had only *to dress* the garden and *to keep* it, an employment which belonged to his pleasure.

Of these fruits the absolute Proprietor and Sovereign of all granted unto him, established upon him a right to eat ; *Thou mayest freely eat*. It is literally on the margin, *eating thou shalt eat* ; but more literally still, *to eat thou shalt eat*. It referred to a present eating ; and also to a future, a still farther eating : *Thou shalt eat* presently ; with the same right still *to eat*, according to every following occasion.

And the right thus granted to the man, was not to himself individually and exclusively ; but, through him, to all his posterity : In connexion with the general and standing right from the sovereign Proprietor of all, to him and them, for using the fruits of the earth as the support of their animal life, according to the 29th verse of the preceding chapter ; though, upon his expulsion from the garden, this right was transferred to an eating the fruits of labour and toil in cultivating the ground,—then become cursed for his sake *.

§ II. The matter of principal consideration, about the

* Gen. iii. 17, 18, 19.

the right thus granted unto the man, is the *Restriction* under which it was granted; as that by which it was turned into a covenant-state: *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* And we may consider this restriction as *expressed* and *enforced*.

1st, *Expressed*: *But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it.* We are here informed *about what*, and *from what* this restriction was made.

1. About what: *The tree of the knowledge of good and evil.* This was the tree which had been mentioned in the 9th verse of this chapter; and was again mentioned in the 3d verse of the next chapter: *A tree in the midst of the garden.* It was called *The tree of the knowledge of good and evil*, not from any thing distinguishing in its nature; but from a divine constitution concerning it, as may be afterwards explained.

2. From what: *Thou shalt not eat of it.* This tree the man (and afterwards the woman upon her distinct formation) knew well enough; or could most readily and immediately distinguish it, with absolute certainty, from all the other trees of the garden. And while he had a right to eat of all the other trees, he was most positively and absolutely restricted from eating of this.

2^{dy}, *Enforced*: *For in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* Here is a *case* supposed, and the *consequence* of it.

1. A case supposed: *For in the day that thou eatest thereof.* Here the man was warned of a hazard which he was in of this eating: A supposition was thus made to him, of what soon became a matter of fact; while the supposition was made, for putting him upon his strictest guard against its becoming so.
And

And he thus got a *knowledge*, but only a speculative knowledge, of the *evil* of *sinning*; particularly of this eating, as the *only sin* which he was immediately in hazard of committing.

2. The consequence of it: As to *what* the same would be, and *when*.

(1.) What the consequence would be: *Thou shalt surely die*. It is literally, on the margin, *dying thou shalt die*; but more literally still, *to die thou shalt die*: Referring to both a present and a future dying, as may be explained afterwards. And he thus got a *knowledge*, but only a speculative knowledge, of the *evil* of *suffering*; as necessarily connected with the *evil* of *sinning*.

(2.) When this consequence would be: *In the day that thou eatest thereof*. The dying was thus to be immediate upon the eating, in that very day: While the death then taking effect would be a sure and ensuring pledge of a farther death afterwards.

The sum of the whole is,—That God restricted the *first man* from eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, upon the pain of *death*.

S E C T. II.

General Remarks, for a farther opening of the Subject.

§ I. The *positive law*, forbidding the man to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, was not the *only* law given to him in his primitive estate. It was, indeed, the only law of obedience then given to him, in the way of external dispensation. But it was not given to him till *after* he was created, completely formed as a reasonable creature: And, if he had been under no law of duty till this was given,

* Eccl. vii. 29.

given, he would have been for some time, however short, in a state of independency upon his glorious Creator.

The man, as all other creatures, was made *very good*; and in a much higher sense than any other part of the visible creation. *God made man upright**; not merely in the posture of his body, but mainly in the perfection of his soul. As made after God's image, he had the *moral law* originally written or impressed upon his heart: Not indeed under that form in which it was afterwards summarily dispensed from *Sinai*, and more specially through the holy Scriptures; but the very same law upon the matter, in all its extent and spirituality,—as holy, and just, and good. His understanding was formed for dictating, and his conscience for enforcing, and his will for practising according to all his occasions, and his affections for delighting in every moral duty,—manifestly founded in the nature of God and of man.

§ II. As the *moral law*, which was a *natural law* to the man, had a penalty of *death* belonging to it; so he needed not to have this declared to him, after he was created: For the *penalty*, as well as the *preceptive* tenor of that law, was sufficiently notified to him in his creation; in the knowledge and conscience of which he was formed.

But the case was very different with regard to the *positive law*. The *eating* from which he was restricted, was, in itself, a matter quite indifferent: The evil of it did nowise lie in the nature of the thing; but wholly arose from that prohibition which God was sovereignly pleased to make of it. And as the man could have no knowledge of this prohibition, but from an expression made of it to him after he was created; it was from the like expression only,

B

that

* Eccl. vii. 29.

that he could have any knowledge of the penalty of death, as annexed to the prohibition. And he knew the will of God in all this matter with most absolute certainty; from the distinct language which was made of it to him, in the words now under consideration.

§ III. There belonged to the positive law a *promise of life*, as well as a penalty of death. A law was then given to man, *which could have given life* *. This was plainly implied in the penalty; which could not but mean all its reverse,—*if thou eatest not, thou shalt surely live*.

But that matter was put beyond all doubt, by a tree in the midst of the garden (verse 9.), called *the tree of life*: While the man must have known, well enough, the reason of the distinguishing name given to this, as well as to the other tree in the midst of the garden. And the *tree of life* could not have been so called from any superlative virtue in its nature, for the preserving and prolonging of his animal life: For then he would have been, upon the matter, confined to an eating of that tree,—so long as it should bear enough of fruit; contrary to the right which was bestowed upon him, even meaning an injunction, about the other trees of the garden. That name given to the tree could only arise, therefore, from a divine constitution concerning it. It was evidently set forth to the man, as a pedge and *sacramental sign* of life; to be fully enjoyed by him, in the way of obedience to that positive law which he was now laid under.

§ IV. While the death to be incurred, by the breach of that law, comprehended *all evil* of *suffering*; the life promised, being the full reverse of it, must

* Gal. iii. 21.

must have comprehended *all good of enjoyment*. And as the man was evidently designed, in the nature of his soul, for an eternal duration; the life promised could not simply mean a continuance of the life which he then had in the garden,—being a life which could not have admitted of eternity in its duration. Nothing less, therefore, could be in the promise, than a state of *eternal life in heaven*; where the man should be advanced to a glorious enjoyment of God, in an immediate manner,—not through any intervention of creature-benefits, or of the exercises belonging to animal life. This is the *eternal life*, which stands opposed to the *wages of sin* *. This is the *eternal life* which our Lord did plainly set forth, as provided in the promise of the first covenant †. And this is the *eternal life* of which he has loosed the forfeiture; by taking upon himself, for his people, their penalty of death: *That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord* ‡.

§ V. By the *promise of life*, the positive law was turned into the nature of a *Covenant*. The *penalty* belonged to the nature of it as a law; but not the *promise*. The man's obedience could have no intrinsic merit; being what he naturally and absolutely owed to his Sovereign Creator. The promise added to the law, was not therefore an effect of God's *justice*; while the man's obedience could not naturally deserve any good, beyond his present enjoyment. It was an effect of God's *favour*, of his mere good pleasure: So that the man was then an object of God's *grace* toward him, as *undeserving*: though it was not till afterwards, that he became an object of it as *ill-deserving*,—which last is the view of *grace*, as ordinarily mentioned in scripture.

But

* Rom. vi. 23. † Luke x. 25,—28. ‡ Rom. v. 21.

But while the man was naturally engaged to God by the *law*, God became graciously engaged to him by the *promise*. And this did constitute the general nature of a *covenant*; as it is a transaction between two parties,—for a benefit to be bestowed by the one, upon a condition to be performed by the other.

And this is called a *Covenant of Life*; as the man was to be thereby entitled to eternal life, upon a determined condition. But it is more commonly called a *Covenant of Works*; as the man's right or title to eternal life, according to that covenant, was to lie in his works of obedience, or to depend upon this condition: Not from any natural merit of these works, but from the gracious constitution which God then made concerning them.

§ VI. In this covenant, under the positive law, the man was put into a public capacity; as the *covenant-head*, or *representative* of all his *natural posterity*. It is evident that God, in dealing with him, was dealing with human nature, with all mankind; speaking to all, in what was said to him. God was then making no establishment at all about mankind, but as making it immediately with *the man*: And it would be absurd to suppose that the millions of his posterity, who were all present in God's eye, were then brought under no establishment at all.

The law of dominion over the other visible creatures; the law about the method of sustaining the animal life; the law for being fruitful, and multiplying, and replenishing the earth; and the law of marriage: all these were evidently laws for mankind.

And it is as evident, that God's covenant-transaction with the man must have included all men, to proceed from him by ordinary generation; that being all in him as their natural root, they were likewise stated before God in him as their covenant-head.

And

And there can be no other way of accounting for the effect of his transgressing the law; that the death which he thereby brought upon himself, hath actually passed upon all his natural posterity,—even *them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression* *.

§ VII. In dealing with the man, the LORD God was not proceeding only in the characters of a Creator and Lawgiver. As he is essentially and infinitely good, he was then *doing good*: He dealt bountifully with the man, as an object of his special favour: preventing him with the blessings of goodness.

This appears, from the great excellency of the nature and state in which the man was created; from the richness, beauty, and pleasantness of the accommodation which was provided for him: And from the wonderful condescension of the infinite ONE towards him: in stooping so low, as to hold the greatest particularity and familiarity of friendly intercourse with him.

But, especially, the singular goodness of God was manifested,—by the *positive state* into which he brought the Covenant of Works. This will come to be particularly explained in another place. It shall only be observed here,—That from this transaction, the man was privileged with a great advantage to his faith and hope. Abstractly from that positive constitution, his prospect of eternal life was to be inferred from the nature of God, in the unerring dictates of his reason and conscience. But now, he had the *faithfulness* of God particularly and *directly* engaged to him for this, in a signified and sealed *promise* of eternal life.

S E C T.

* Rom. v. 14.

S E C T. III.

Of the Restriction laid upon the first man.

As in the right with which the man was invested, to eat of every tree of the garden,—he was restricted from eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; this restriction was *arbitrary, reasonable, absolute, extensive, probatory, peculiar* to our first parents, and *temporary*.

§ I. The restriction was *arbitrary* in its nature; wholly founded in the mere will of God, or in his sovereign good pleasure.

The *moral law*, impressed on his heart, was of a very different nature. There was no necessity in God for creating man, a reasonable being: But there was such a necessity of creating him under an impression of the *moral law*; as otherwise he could not have been originally in a state of active subjection to his Sovereign Creator. This law, therefore, was not founded in the divine *pleasure*, but in the divine *perfections*: Particularly, in God's essential right of *moral dominion* over his reasonable creature; and his essential claim of obligation upon that creature, for living in a conformity to the holy nature of his creating LORD *.——Nor could this moral law have been any other to the man, in his reasonable nature, than it actually was; while the distinctions between *moral good* and *evil* cannot be arbitrary, more than the attributes of the divine nature in which they are founded. A sovereignty in God, which could have settled these distinctions, in a different, or even an opposite manner, (as some have imagined in their metaphysical speculations), would have been such as
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* 1 Pet. i. 16.

could have disposed, in the same manner, of his own infinite properties. And the unalterable state of those distinctions cannot depend originally on the unchangeableness of the *divine will*, when once expressed in a law; but on the unchangeableness of the *divine nature*.

But the *positive law* given to the man, after his creation, was wholly an effect of the divine *pleasure*. It was equal with God, to give or not give it. The forbidden fruit had nothing hurtful in its nature; more than that of any other tree in the garden. The eating of it was not therefore forbidden *because evil*; but it *became evil*, by the forbidding of it.

§ II. The restriction was *reasonable*. There was no reasonableness of it, before it was laid upon the man: But it became reasonable, in the laying of it upon him; as the *will* of God bears it in a sufficient reason for itself.

Though the moral law has a reason in the nature of God, and in the nature of those things which it requires and forbids; yet the *will* of God is the immediate and formal reason of obedience to him, not the intrinsic natural rationality of the thing. As the supreme Lawgiver is entitled to the *absolute subjection* of his reasonable creatures; so likewise to an *implicit obedience*, or such as hath no reason for it but in his *will*: And it was most reasonable that he should require this, as he did in the *positive law*. That law was therefore a most proper test, and the only test then prescribed to the man, of *perfectly implicit* obedience to the divine pleasure; as the highest test of his absolute subjection and obedience: While the *will* of God, which is the immediate and formal reason of all proper obedience to him,—was made the *mere reason* of it, in the case of that positive law.

And it was most reasonable, that God should thus
express

express a *reservation* of his own supreme and absolute property in that lower world—over which he had given a dominion to the man; as a dominion which did, by no means, make it absolutely his: And that he should thus be kept in mind, of his owing all his enjoyments in it to the divine pleasure; as being accountable to God for all his use of these enjoyments. Besides, he was thereby most properly put in mind, that his supreme, ultimate and unlimited happiness could not lie in any benefits of his animal life; but was to be sought in the immediate enjoyment of God himself.

§ III. The restriction was *absolute*. It is the case of every evil which God forbids,—that whatever any way leads or tends to it, is to be understood as therein also forbidden. And so it was with regard to the eating now considered.

The *fact* of eating the fruit was forbidden: And that so long as the tree should bear fruit; or till God should make a different signification of his will. And all imagination, inclination or desire of eating it, was to be understood as likewise forbidden. He was not to *touch* it, as is expressed in the third verse of the next chapter. He was to guard against all entering into a temptation to eat of it; against all questioning or reasoning upon the subject,—all admitting of any doubt or hesitation about the truth, the absoluteness or equity of the prohibition: Such as the serpent did soon afterwards effectuate. When the tempter entered upon his deceit, no communication should have been held with him,—no ear should have been given to him; no attempt should have been made, to withstand him in the way of argumentation: As it is the duty of a Christian still, under temptation,—to guard against all defiling of his mind therewith, by admitting the matter of it into his meditation;

titiation; while he cannot overcome the temptation, in the way of trying to get himself reasoned out of it, —instead of immediately rejecting it on the first proposal.

And as the man was not to touch the fruit by his *hand*, so neither by his *eye*, nor even by his *thought*; in any tendency toward eating it.—He was not indeed absolutely forbidden to look at it or think of it : But the look and thought were only to be unto fresh recollections of God's will concerning it ; under a full persuasion of and acquiescence in the same. He might thus warrantably look and think, in a disposition of absolute and chearful homage to his Sovereign LORD; with renewed approbations of his will in that matter : And with renewed thankfulness for the sufficient provision which he otherwise enjoyed ; according to all the necessities of his animal state.

§ IV. The restriction was *extensive*, in the general meaning of it ; though confined, in its terms, to one particular fact.—The *positive law* did not supersede the *moral law*, or come into the place of it : On the contrary, the whole of *this* was virtually comprehended in *that* ; or, as it were, wrapt up in it. The *positive law* is therefore to be considered as extending to every article of that homage which the man owed to God ; but immediately under the form of compliance with his will about the forbidden fruit. This compliance was a general form of his active and ready subjection to the divine sovereignty and authority ; virtually extending to all the particular displays thereof, in the precepts and prohibitions of the moral law. In fulfilling the *positive law*, he would fulfil the *moral law* : And in breaking the *positive law*, he would also break the *moral law*,—it being the same divine sovereignty and authority which was engaged in both ; so that a peculiar

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trampling upon it in the one, was a general trampling upon it in the other likewise: *For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all* *.

The sum of the whole moral law is this: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself* †.

Accordingly, the man's love to God and to his own posterity, as to be manifested in keeping the positive law,—was the sum of, and virtually the whole law under which he then stood. The whole *moral law* belonged to the law of the Covenant of Works: And that whole Covenant was to be kept or broken, according as the *positive law* should be so.

§ V. The restriction was *probatory*. The positive law was given for a *proof*, and the highest proof, of the man's absolute subjection to the will of God: Of his being disposed to yield *implicit obedience* to his Sovereign LORD, where he could see no reason for his obedience but *mere will* and pleasure; a purpose which could not have been served by any precept or prohibition of the moral law. It was thus designed for a *test* of his fidelity, with regard to the whole law of the Covenant of Works: It was made the *trying point*, the *turning hinge* of the whole; that the whole was to be kept in keeping this,—and, in breaking this, the whole was to be broken. And the breaking of the whole would thus be ascertained, for his conviction, beyond all question or excuse; by one individual, distinct, and external fact.

It was from this constitution, and not from any thing in the nature of one of the trees in the midst of the garden, that it got the name of *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*.—It highly concerned the
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* James ii. 10.

† Luke x. 27.

man to know the infinite *difference* between *good* and *evil*; as to the *doing* and *enjoying* of *good*, on the one hand,—with the *doing* and *suffering* of *evil*, on the other: As also the inseparable connection between the *good* of *obedience* and of *blessedness*; as between the *evil* of *disobedience* and of *misery*: And that he could not *know*, in his behaviour, both the *good* of *obedience* and the *evil* of *disobedience*,—but only the one or the other; as also that the *good* of *blessedness* and the *evil* of *misery*, could not *both*, but only the one or the other, be matter of his experience.

And his coming to the full enjoyment of all *good* of *blessedness*, or sinking into the depths of all *evil* of *misery*,—was to turn on the hinge of dealing with this tree; by doing the *good* of *obedience*, or the *evil* of *disobedience*,—with regard to the restriction which was laid upon him. In abstaining from the fruit, he was to *know* all *good* *experimentally*; and *evil* only *speculatively*: But, in eating, he was to *know* all *evil* *experimentally*; and *good* only *speculatively*. In the one case, he was to *know* *good* and *evil* as *God* doth; but in the other case, he was to know them as the *devil* doth,—and, naturally, for ever.

At the 22d verse of the next chapter, the infinite THREE-IN-ONE and ONE-IN-THREE comes in saying, according to our translation: *Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil*. It is at least very hard, to put a decent sense upon these words. They can only mean a sort of divine *irony* or *ridicule*, saying one thing and meaning the contrary,—with regard to fallen man. And it is hard to conceive of *God's* speaking so lightly, about his creature lately so much favoured,—as newly sunk into the deeps of sin and misery. But the *Hebrew* text, according to its punctuation, gives a very different sense.—The word translated *is become*, naturally and ordinarily signifies *was*: And there is a *minor distinctive*

tive upon the word translated *the man*; by which it is absolutely separated from an immediate construction with the following word (which should be rendered) *was*,—and stands in an immediate construction with the foregoing word rendered *behold*. *The man* is therefore an accusative governed by the foregoing word; and not a nominative to the following verb. And the proper translation, in the true emphasis marked by the Hebrew punctuation, is this; *Behold the man, he was as one of us, to know good and evil*. He *was* so, but behold what he now *is*! Most striking language of divine pity and compassion.

And as the whole condition of the Covenant of Works was summed up, in the one law about *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*,—reducing the trial of the man's maintaining his first estate to that single point; it was by the breach of it that he plunged himself into a new and dreadful knowledge of good and evil: Which he has wofully left as an inheritance to his posterity.

§ VI. The restriction was *peculiar* to the man; extending to the woman upon her distinct formation, as *one party* with him in the Covenant of Works. This is evident,—from there being no natural impression or presumption of the restriction about the forbidden tree, in the hearts or consciences of any of the man's posterity; as there is, in some measure, of the *moral law*, the natural law of the Covenant of Works, in the hearts and consciences of them all. And, indeed, it could not be otherwise; as the restriction was only the *revealed will* of God to the man, after he was made upright.—Besides, almost all his posterity were necessarily to be dispersed; beyond all reach of any business with that tree.

But the matter of chief consideration here, is,—that the restriction was the immediate *condition* of the Covenant

Covenant of Works, prescribed to the man, as the covenant-head of mankind; in which view, it could belong to him only: As the keeping or breaking of the Covenant, the fulfilling or failing in its condition, could, in the nature of the thing, be by him only,—and not by any of his natural posterity. Had he stood, they could not have fallen,—consistently with his covenant-headship: Had he persevered in the fulfilling of the condition, till the time of his trial should have been expired; he and they would have been confirmed, against all hazard of any future breaking of it,—even such of them as might have continued or come within the reach of the forbidden fruit. And as it was not to be *their* abstaining, but *his* abstaining from that fruit, on which the keeping and good effect of the Covenant was to depend; while the condition of it, in the aforesaid restriction, was prescribed to him alone: Immediately upon his breaking thereof, both he and they were expelled from all future access to any tree in the garden.

§ VII. The restriction was *temporary*, as to the man's abstaining from the forbidden tree.—He was, by no means, formed for an *eternity* in the exercises of an animal life, about any tree in the garden. And as his abstaining from that tree, was the immediate condition of the Covenant of Works; this condition must have been fulfilled, in some period of his temporal state.

That Covenant had a *promise of eternal life* in heaven; of immediate and glorious communion with God, infinitely above all animal exercises and enjoyments. But he could not have been advanced to that happy state, till the condition of the Covenant was fulfilled: And if it had not been to be so at a certain length of time, but to be always running on in the fulfilling

fulfilling; the promise would have been quite vain, the promised life never to be obtained.

This condition must therefore have been fulfilled at a certain moment; when he would have been no longer in a state of *trial*, but brought into a state of *confirmation*,—as the angels who left not their own habitation. And all his posterity, after that issue of his trial, must have been confirmed in and with him for ever; according to the very nature of the Covenant. For his *covenant-headship* could have been of no reality, without communicating his confirming *righteousness* to them if he had stood; as he communicated his condemning *guiltiness* to them, upon his falling into the breach of the Covenant made with them in him.

As to what we may reasonably suppose, about the time, and manner, and circumstances, of the covenant-condition coming to be fulfilled,—according to the nature of the Covenant, and the man's representation in it; some account may be given in another chapter.

S E C T. IV.

Of the Penalty under which the Restriction was laid upon the first Man.

As the man was restricted from eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, *upon the pain of death*; he certainly knew what was meant by the denounced *death*, as comprehending all evil of punishment and suffering. But the particular state of his knowledge upon this head, so long as he had it only for a matter of speculative apprehension,—cannot now be explained. We are therefore to consider it as it proved to be, when become a matter of fact in woful experience. Accordingly there was
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was meant a death *present, future, just, infallible, permanent, universal*, and peculiarly *connected* with an eating of the forbidden fruit.

§ I. The penalty meant a *present* death, according to the express terms of it,—*for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.* The eating and the dying were to be both in the very same day. This did not only mean his immediately becoming liable to death, as laid under a sentence of death; and so, becoming *judicially* dead. Nor did it mean only a begun mortality in the state of his body; its immediately becoming disposed toward a dissolution, through a begun principle of animal disorder. But, in the moment of his eating, there was an *actual* and real death inflicted upon him; as, otherwise, the penalty could not have been verified, according to the truth and propriety of its terms.

And this was a death as to the state of his soul, in an immediate separation of it from God; infinitely more dreadful, than the separation to be afterwards made of it from his body. In this spiritual death, he lost his original conformity to God; friendly communion with him, and favourable communications from him: His *conscience* became possessed and defiled by guilt; abolishing confidence in God, and making him a terror to the sinning creature: His *love* to God, as a friend, was extinguished; giving place to *hatred* of him as an enemy: His *understanding* was horribly darkened; through a withdrawing of that light of the glorious perfections and special favour of God, which had been directly shining into it: His *will* was stated in a wicked contradiction to the authority and will of God: And his *affections*, turned quite away from God; were set upon a most vain search of happiness in the enjoyments of his animal life. Thus, his soul did immediately sink into a state
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of universal corruption; of absolute disconformity unto, and alienation from God: And as this *present* death was, in one respect, most sinful; it was, in another respect, a dreadful punishment of sin.

§ II. The penalty meant a *future* death. It strictly runs, as hath been observed; to *die*, or to a *dying thou shalt die*: Thou *shalt die* presently, in the very day of eating; but still to *die*, or toward a *future dying* afterwards. He immediately became *dead*, as to *the all* of the threatened death, *judicially*; but not *actually*. Though the execution of the sentence was immediately begun, yet not toward a being immediately finished or completed: As this could not have consisted with the manifest necessity of his being preserved, during some time, in a capacity for the propagation of his offspring, who were to be partakers with him in the death.

This future death is twofold; in time, and beyond time: Or, on earth and in hell.

1st, He was to undergo a further death *in time*; or on earth, at the end of his time. And this death was to consist in a separation of his soul from his body: For, as God had formed his body of the dust of the ground,—the penalty did comprehend this dreadful article; *unto dust thou shalt return* *.

The man, in his primitive condition, was *immortal*, as to the state of his body. Had he stood, the union of his soul and body could never have been dissolved. This doth not imply, that his body had then a *natural* immortality, like his soul: For it was naturally dissolvable or separable into parts, as much as now. But it was then under a positive constitution or establishment, for an unimpairable state of preservation, in a perpetual union with his soul,—by the sovereign will and power of God; from which
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* Gen. iii. 19.

he wofully fell, by falling into sin. And it is to be supposed, that the same *immortal* condition would have belonged to all his posterity, if he had stood; as they must have stood in and with him, according to the nature of the covenant: Without supposing that they must have all continued on the earth, till all were brought forth; for they might have been gradually translated in their times, as *Enoch* was,—so that the earth would have never been overpeopled. But, by sin, bodily death entered into the world of mankind.

2dly, He was sentenced to undergo a still further death, *beyond time*; or, in hell, as the place of final punishment. This *death* was to be the reverse of the *eternal life* promised in the Covenant of Works: As it is likewise the reverse of that eternal life which is provided in the Covenant of Grace *. This death means the destruction of both soul and body in hell: To take effect upon the soul, immediately on its separation from the body; and on both soul and body as reunited, in the resurrection of this from the grave. And such was to be the completement of the penalty in its execution; A state of absolute loss, as to all sorts and even appearance of good; in suffering all extremities of sensible punishment.

§ III. The penalty meant a *just* death. *The wages of sin is death* *; wages no ways exceeding the demerit of the work. It is *the judgment of God*, that these who perpetrate such work not only are to undergo, but *are worthy of death* †. Sin is an absolute opposition to the infinite perfections and goodness of God, his infinite authority and power. It is *the all* of one sort of evil, against God; and therefore it must deserve *the all* of the other sort of evil, from God. As the sinner will not have God to be *for him*,

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* Rom. vi. 23.

† Rom. i. 32.

he must have God *against him* ; *wholly* for or against him.

The *holiness* of God stands in an infinite and absolute *opposition* to sin ; which therefore cannot but be *effective* in the punishment of the sinner, as the sun's light is effective against darkness. And God's moral dominion over the reasonable creature, cannot be maintained, but in one of two ways ; either in that creature's active subjection to his *preceptive* will, or passive subjection to his *punishing* will : For if the creature could shake off, or be exempted from both, he would immediately be in a state of moral independence upon God.

The infinite ONE would therefore be, upon the matter, renouncing the sovereignty of his being, and the righteousness of his nature, should he suffer sin to pass altogether unpunished. And the sinning creature being made for an eternity of existence ; while he can never make an atonement for the sin which he has committed, as he can never recover himself from sinning : The punishment of his sin must therefore be eternal ; as will be more particularly observed in a little. Moreover, though sin be a finite disposition or action, as belonging to or committed by a finite being ; it must be of infinite malignity,—as it is an hostility against the infinite Being, in all his perfections, yea in his very existence : And it must therefore deserve all extremity of punishment to which the sinner can be subjected.

And the *faithfulness* of God is engaged for this, in the penalty of his law ; a penalty not arbitrary,—but founded in the righteousness and rights of his nature, equally with the precepts. The death denounced is therefore absolutely just : And there is a necessity of its being inflicted upon the sinner, or upon a surety in his place ; as absolutely indispensable, as the necessity of God's not denying himself.

§ IV. The penalty meant an *infallible* death. This is evident from the *justness* of it, which has been considered. It is likewise absolutely and unconditionally denounced, in the penalty of the law : While the infallibility of it, as to its effect, is established in the faithfulness, yea in the very nature of God ; as also in the intrinsic nature of sin, and its essential tendency toward suffering.

But that infallibility of the death, beside this general state of it, is to be considered likewise in a more particular view ; as it stands in a consistency, yea in a connection with all the dispensations of God's forbearance, or long-suffering patience : And with his bestowing of many providential favours or privileges upon such as are continuing under the sentence of that death ; even loading them with such benefits. It is not a blind and impetuous necessity, of punishing sin which belongs to the divine nature ; like that of the sun shining, or the fire burning. The gospel manifests, that the penalty did leave room for the substitution of a surety to bear its effect : And it quickly appeared in providence, that there was still an open door for delays, as to that future death which it meant—with regard to those continuing under it. Though there is no redemption from the temporal death as to the matter of it, but only from its penal nature ; yet there are consistent delays of it, for various lengths of time. The man was not overtaken by it, till nine hundred and thirty years after his fall : And though it is to be supposed that he had a begun recovery, upon the ground of the promise given to him when newly fallen ; yet there is no reason to suppose, in the case of his having still continued under the penalty, that this death would have overtaken him any sooner.

And such delays did necessarily belong to God's original constitution, about the production of the human

man kind. They were to be produced in the way of natural propagation, from one race to another: And as it was necessary, that the world should be continued in a state admitting of such propagation; so also, that men should be continued in it, through different lengths and various conveniencies of life, for the same purpose: It is therefore evident, that the standing of this world in its present state, after the man's fall, was no wise properly owing to the interposition of the *Mediator*: But that the continuance of this state was secured by the penalty, till the generations of mankind should be completed; as it necessarily required the production of all the seed who sinned in, and fell with the first man,—for having an immediate effect upon them.

Though the threatened death was infallibly to take effect, or sin was necessarily to be punished; yet the divine sovereignty and wisdom were also to have an effect in settling the times and other circumstances of the punishment,—particularly as to the *sensible* parts thereof. And there is no inconsistency of any providential favours or privileges bestowed on men, with their continued and full subjection to the legal penalty,—or with the nature of that penalty itself: Because, under all these enjoyments, it is still taking a secret and *insensible* effect upon them; as God is still dealing *judicially* with them,—cursing their blessings, their basket and their store. And so, through their misimprovement and abuse of such blessings, they are judicially hardened in sin; unto a being more and more ripened for that full effect, which the *death* meant in the penalty will most infallibly and dreadfully have upon them, at the end of their times.

So it is, as to the natural and most grievous state of matters. The supernatural and most gracious state thereof, under another covenant,—is of a very different consideration.

§ V. The penalty meant a *permanent* death. The execution of it was not to be over at a certain time; as the punishment of death, annexed to the transgression of a human law. The death meant in the penalty was to be an *ever-dying*; ever suffering the pains of death, without intermission or end.

The *temporal death*, in the separation of the soul from the body, was indeed to be over and ended, as to the material fact of it,—in a season of God's appointment. But it was likewise to be of a *permanent* nature, not only as excluding from all return into the former condition; but mainly, as the punishment suffered therein was to be continued upon the soul,—immediately consigned thereby to the state of *death in hell*.

And this death, first of the soul, afterwards of soul and body reunited, was to be eternal: Agreeably to the eternal duration of the sinner, with the nature and demerit of sin; and according to most express testimonies of holy Scripture. It is called, in general, *eternal judgment* *; *everlasting contempt* †; and *everlasting punishment* ‡. And an endless permanency belongs to the *sensible* nature of this dying; a permanent suffering of all the inexpressible *agonies* of that death, without any abatement for ever: As it is called *everlasting burnings* ||; *everlasting fire* §; *a suffering the vengeance of eternal fire* **; *where their worm* (a tormenting conscience) *dieth not, and the fire* (of God's vengeance) *never shall be quenched* ††; *a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth* ‡‡. And thus it is, that the *death* meant in the penalty was to be a *most proper* and *full* reverse of the *eternal life* which was promised to the man upon his obedience;

* Heb. vi. 2.

† Dan. xii. 2.

‡ Matth. xxv. 46.

|| Isa. xxxiii. 14.

§ Matth. xxv. 41.

** Jude ver. 7.

†† Mark ix. 43, 44.

‡‡ Matth. xiii. 42.

obedience; and is now *the gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

But, in a particular manner, the *spiritual death*, which was to take effect in the very day of eating the forbidden fruit,—hath an essential permanency belonging to it. The death of the soul, in the universal corruption or depravity thereof, bears upon it a stamp of eternity; according to its nature, it must be perpetual. The power of God could not be exerted in recovering from it, consistently with the righteousness and rights of his nature; without such an atonement for sin as no creature could make, or even devise. The sinner could have neither any ability nor inclination to recover himself, in returning to God; he is absolutely without strength, and loves to have it so. Wherefore, the depravity of his soul is naturally quite incurable, for ever. This death is otherwise represented as a state of universal disease: *The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrifying sores* *. And though the natural body, under a disease, may still retain a principle of recovery; so as nature can get the better of this disease: Yet no such principle remains under that soul-disease: Nothing but a natural, or essential and infallible tendency toward eternal death in hell: where the death of the soul is to be continued in a state of absolute corruption and sinning, as well as of suffering, for ever.

§ VI. The penalty meant an *universal death*. It did not merely ascertain the death of the individual man then existing, in the event of his transgression; but likewise of all his posterity, who should exist in successive generations. The *LORD God* was not then speaking to *the man* as a private person, or only as
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* Isa. i. 5, 6.

the natural root of mankind ; but likewise as representing them all in a state of *covenant-headship*. His sinning was not to be the sin only of his person, but of human nature ; his fall was to be the fall of mankind, and his death was to comprehend the death of them all. So it was, with regard to his *first sin* to be committed by him (if at all) in his public character ; though not with regard to the guilt and demerit of any sin to be afterwards committed by him, when fallen from that character in committing his first sin.

Thus all the *death, spiritual and temporal*, which has and will overspread the world,—and the *eternal death* which multitudes of mankind have been and will be plunged into ; all belonged to, or was included in the dreadfully universal death which had been denounced in the penalty.—And the testimony of Scripture, on this head, is most explicit ; that *by man came death* *, all the death of mankind : *By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so, death passed upon all men* †. All the death which has passed, and will pass upon all men, is therefore a continued execution of that awful penalty ; the very death which belonged to the original matter of it, in its covenant-universality.

§ VII. The penalty meant a death *peculiarly connected* with the eating of the forbidden fruit.

Death, in all the extent which has been considered, is *the wages of sin*,—of every sin : “ Every sin deserveth “ God’s wrath and curse ; both in this life, and that “ which is to come.” The *moral law*, that natural law, impressed upon the man’s soul in his creation,—had the same penalty of death belonging to it, which was afterwards expressed in the *positive law* ; and belonging separately to every article of it. The man’s reason and conscience as naturally dictated that
penalty,

* 1 Cor. xv. 21.

† Rom. v. 12.

penalty, as it did the precept; bearing this awful determination, concerning the breach of all and every precept of the moral law,—*the soul that sinneth, it shall die.*

But, in the *positive law*, this death was denounced as the special punishment of *that sin* which was to consist in eating the forbidden fruit. The man was placed in an holy and happy state; but not beyond a hazard of falling from it. In the penalty, God expressed to him a warning of his hazard; which must be considered, in the nature of the thing, as a *fair* and *full* warning of *all* the hazard in which he then actually stood. Such was all the hazard, not *absolutely* and *ultimately*; but *immediately*, or only at *first instance*. When informed, that upon *eating* he *should die*; he was certainly given to understand, that upon *not eating* he *should not die*,—should live. And no reasonable interpretation could be put upon the penalty, but as it means,—that the *eating* was the *only sin* which he was immediately in hazard of committing; and that *all* the hazard he was in of *death*, was *immediately* through a committing of that sin. Yet, in committing that sin, he was to fall into all other sin; an universal breach of the whole moral law: And he was thence to become subject to death, not only as the penalty annexed to the positive precept; but likewise as it was naturally annexed to every precept of the moral law. But a further explanation of this matter, is referred to another chapter.

S E C T. V.

Some Inferences from the foregoing general View.

SEVERAL things which result as necessary consequences from this general view, may be more properly

perly observed,—when the view comes to be more particular. At present, there may be a deduction of the following inferences.

INF. I. *Man was originally designed for an eternal State.*

The important declaration, *that whatsoever God doeth (or made, as the word is applied to the work of creation*)*, *it shall be for ever*; may bear some application to his producing of creatures out of nothing. *Annihilation*, or the reducing of creatures, particularly reasonable creatures, to their original nothing,—though it could not properly bear the nature of punishment, is yet a matter of most horrible apprehension. And such annihilation could not require any exertion of divine power; but only a with-holding of that exertion thereof, upon which the momentary subsistence of every creature depends: While no creature has any principle of *self-existence*, for a moment. At the same time, there appears no reason to suppose,—that God will ever suffer any thing to which he has given a being, to drop at any time out of being,—or become as if it had never been. *The earth and heavens shall wax old as a garment; as a vesture shall he change them, and they shall be changed †*: But this is absolutely different from reducing them to nothing. *All these things shall be dissolved*, not annihilated; giving place to *new heavens and a new earth ‡*. God saith,—*Behold, I make all things new ||*.

The holy scripture expressly teacheth, That *the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God*;—*because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption,*

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ruption,

* Gen. i. 7, 16, 25.; ii. 2, 3, 4.; Exod. xx. 11.

† Psal. cii. 26. ‡ 2 Pet. iii. 11, 13. || Rev. xxi. 5.

ruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God *. And this plainly signifies, that, in a future period, the material world shall be no longer *subject to vanity*: Shall no longer be a seat of human wickedness as now, instrumental by sinful men in dishonouring God; but shall be renewed into such glorious forms as we cannot now conceive of, into a world *wherewith dwelleth righteousness* †; wherein these works of God shall completely praise him,—through eternal acknowledgments of his glory therein, by holy angels and men.

Yet this doth nowise mean,—that the material creation shall be either continued in or restored unto its present state and form. And it gives no countenance to the strange absurdity; as if, after the great dissolution of all things, not only all the matter of this world, but likewise all or any *particular forms* of that matter, in mere *animal* or *unintelligent* life, were to be restored and preserved for ever.

But as man had a soul of *natural* immortality, so he had a body of *positive* immortality. In this complex and wonderful state of being, he had a promise of *eternal life*. And it is evident from revelation, that the dissolving of the mysterious union betwixt soul and body, upon his transgression,—was to be only for a time; these were to be reunited afterwards, for an eternal subsistence in that state. And there is no reason to suppose that, in the other world, there will be any other *forms* of *living* matter, than in the bodies of mankind upon their resurrection.

INF. II. *The Depravity of human Nature is not so ancient as that Nature itself.*

Some infidels of the present age have done open despite to divine revelation, in the most express terms of it; by a new scheme of philosophy, concerning the

* Rom. viii. 19, 20, 21. † 2 Pet. iii. 13.

the original state of mankind. According to that scheme, people have wrought themselves up to a far better condition than originally belonged to human nature: As if man had been at first a *savage animal*; and gradually raised up from this brutality, by the means of what is called *civilization*.

But the scriptural account of man's primitive estate is absolutely different. According thereto,—he was made an *upright* creature, after the image of God; in knowledge, and righteousness, and true holiness: Possessed of these qualifications in such a measure, as none of his natural descendants ever did or can attain to in this world. Such was the honour of his first estate; though he abode in it but for a very short time. And these who consider God as having otherwise made man, even in a worse condition than the civilized part of his posterity is now in,—cannot be supposed to have right apprehensions of the God who made him; or to consider him as God's workmanship.

INF. III. *The Origin of moral Evil, in human Depravity, is only made known by Revelation.*

Nothing is more obvious, than that naturally *the whole world lieth in wickedness* *. This appears to be the case, even in the most early stages of rational life. And it cannot be reasonably pretended, that the original of this wickedness lies in bad example. For the first sinner of the human kind could have no bad example, in that kind, for being imitated. Besides, there are most evident workings of moral depravity so very early in childhood, as to anticipate all capacity for observing and following the example of others. And there are frequent instances of persons turning out remarkably wicked, though trained

* John v. 19.

ed up under the best examples and instructions that the world affords. Such depravity, or corruption, must therefore be *original* to every person; ingenerate with the various principles of his nature: Though it is not suffered to have equal operations in all. And so, every person has reason to acknowledge, with the Psalmist; *I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me* *.

Some modern, and even contradictory schemes of *natural history* do yet agree on the side of *Deism*; rejecting the *scriptural history* of the creation of this world, and of the various creatures which it contains,—as preferring thereto, the product of vain imaginations. But, abstracting from the scripture-accounts of this matter; none who acknowledge *God as God* can suppose, that human nature was primitively formed by him in its present state of corruption. Whence, then, can this have proceeded? What can have been the real origin of it? Every one may see that it is a matter of fact: But none can give even any appearance of a rational account, how it has come to be so. Heathens could not miss to observe the depravity of human nature: But they were absolutely at a loss about explaining the rise of it; otherwise than by foolish or impious fables.

There is, therefore, no knowledge to be had of the real *origin* of *moral evil* in human depravity, but from the *revelation* which is made of it to us; particularly, in the second and third chapters of *Genesis*. There, we have a definite character of the *first* sin, that was committed by the first man; as the *only* sin, at first instance, which was committible by him. By one man, that sin entered into the world; and, with it, all other sin. And the corruption which his nature did thus immediately sink into, has been propagated

* Psal. li. 5.

pagated from him to all his natural posterity; as may be further considered in the sequel.

INF. IV. *There can be no proper and acceptable Obedience to God, but in a direct Regard to his Will, as the formal or precise Reason of it.*

It is not enough to the singular profligateness of our time, that it has produced a new fashion of *natural philosophy*,—by which God is, upon the matter, turned out of the *natural world*; or left in it only as a Spectator of how matters go, according to what are called the *Laws of Nature*: In opposition to the immediate and absolute dependence which all things in it, with all causes and effects, have upon the continual exertions of the divine Will and Power; as much for their *momentary subsistence* in any courses and connections, as for their *first existence*.—But, by some modern and fashionable doctrines of *moral philosophy*, God is also turned out of the *moral world*. For, according to this philosophy, full of inconsistencies, yet all rooted in *Atheism*,—the foundation of morality lies in the *nature and will* of man: While the ground and reason of *moral obligation* is stated in certain *tastes, feelings, dispositions or affections* of the human mind or heart,—or in what is taken to be the *natural fitness* of things; without any direct regard to the authority and will, or to the very being of God.

The precepts of the moral law have indeed an intrinsic *reasonableness* of what it requires and forbids. Our reason can easily apprehend a natural equity and propriety, or fitness, in the matter of these precepts; as originally founded in the perfections of the divine nature. Even abstracting from the authority and will of God, the matter of them approves itself to the human mind,—as of natural and necessary obligation:

gation: That obedience thereto is required *because good*, not merely good *because required*.

But this original ground of moral obligation in the divine nature, cannot be the *immediate* ground upon which our obedience is to proceed. For then, we would not be so properly *obeying God* as *our own reason*: We would not be directly serving *him*, but *ourselves*; in submitting to our natural apprehensions of what is proper and just. It is not the *nature of God*, or the reason of duty in his nature, that must be the immediate rule of our obedience,—the formal and precise reason of it. This can only be the *will of God*, as his authority is interposed in manifesting the same to us. Let the duty required be ever so *reasonable* in its nature; it is not this, but God's *requisition* of it, that we must have an immediate respect unto in every act of obedience. And thus only can we be properly acknowledging God as *our Judge, our Lawgiver, our King**: Not doing what is required, merely or mainly because we think it *right*; but because he requires it.

This point was most eminently settled, in God's procedure with the first man —He was under the obligation of the whole moral law, as impressed on his heart and conscience in his creation. But when he had the *will* of God to comply with in the precepts of that law, it was not *mere will*: He could not but see a glorious reason for it in the nature of God. Yet, while this was to be considered as a reason of God's *giving* the law; he was not to consider it as likewise the proper reason for his *obeying it*: It was the *will* of God in that law, not the *reasonableness* of his will therein, to which man was to pay homage; though this was at the same time to be acknowledged, with complacence and adoration.—And the man got a most singular instruction, for making the *will of God* the

* Isa. xxxiii. 22.

the proper reason of all his obedience: When it was all brought to turn upon the hinge of the positive precept, in which he had only the *mere will* of God to regard as the reason of his obedience; without any reason for it in the matter of that precept. This test of *absolute* and *implicit* obedience to the *mere will* of God, was to be a standing memorial,—for making the *will of God* the formal and precise reason of all other obedience.

INF. V. *There can be no proper and acceptable Obedience to God, but immediately upon the ground of Revelation.*

The moral law, which was to the man a *natural* law, contained a discovery to him of God's will about his duty,—a rule for his obedience to his Sovereign LORD. But he was not left a moment, to yield obedience immediately on that ground; or simply from the natural dictates of his reason and conscience. The positive precept was instantly dispensed as an article of God's *revealed will* to him; and he was to maintain his moral obedience, in and through a compliance with this revealed will of God. Had he stood, he must have still had his first respect to that revealed law, in the whole matter of his obedience: Never supposing, that he was to do the will of God in any moral precept,—but as, in the first place, maintaining a submission to and dependence upon the positive revelation of the divine pleasure about the forbidden tree. And had he stood out the time of his probation or trial, till he should have had no more concern with that tree, as being brought into a state of confirmation; this would have been the matter of a farther revelation to him, for the *immediate* ground of all his acceptable obedience. And, upon his fall, when the first revelation of God's will

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in the positive precept was to be of no longer benefit to him; he got a farther revelation, in the promise of the blessed and blessing SEED, for the *immediate* ground of all his future obedience and acceptance.

It is therefore evident that man, in his primitive estate, knew nothing of, had nothing ado with a *mere natural religion*; the mere religion of natural reason and conscience. He could yield no proper and acceptable obedience to God, in that manner. Man was never made for any religion at all, without positive revelation as the immediate ground of it: And so, every scheme of a *mere natural religion* is a false religion, or a mere fiction. It is even absurd to suppose, that there can be any reality of such religion in the case of sinful men, upon whose hearts the original impression of the moral law is so much defaced; or that any such religion, whatever be pretended, can be of any account or acceptance with God. Was man, in his upright state, to have his religion proceeding upon God's revealed will; much more must this be the case with fallen men. We can have no truth of religion at all, but what proceeds upon the revelation which we are now blessed with,—the religion of the gospel. We can make no proper account of the moral law, but as we embrace that revelation; for having our moral obedience regulated by the doctrines and promises of the gospel. And so far as men are rejecters, or perverters of that revelation; they are so far in a state of *irreligion* and *immorality*, according to the estimate which ought to be made of their case.

INF. VI. *All God's Dealing with Men about their everlasting Concerns, have ever been in a Covenant-Form.*

God established a *Covenant of Works* with the first man, comprehending the whole ground of his claim
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and expectation,—not only for being preserved in his original happiness while on earth; but also for being translated, in due time, to a glorious state of eternal life in heaven. That Covenant was established with him, not only for himself; but also with and for all his natural posterity, according to the radical and represented being which they had in him. And if he had fulfilled the *condition* of that Covenant, he and they would have enjoyed a full accomplishment of its *promise* of eternal life.

Upon the breach of that Covenant, there remained not for him and them, either any natural prospect or possibility of escaping eternal death. But God was pleased, in his gracious sovereignty, to provide a supernatural way of escape; which began to be revealed, in the great promise on the back of the fall. And as the ruin was through one Covenant now broken; the recovery was to be through another, and an everlasting Covenant: The *Covenant of Grace*. This is not the place, for any particular account of that Covenant. But it may be observed in general,—that herein lies the only way of God's dealing with men now, about their obtaining eternal life. All are lost, on the way to everlasting perdition in hell, according to the broken Covenant of Works: And it is vain for any to imagine that they can be saved from that horrible perdition, otherwise than by the Covenant of Grace; upon the ground of the condition thereof, as fulfilled by *the second man, the Lord from heaven* *.

According to his invariable constitution, God can have no dealing with men about their everlasting concerns,—but in the way of the one or the other of these Covenants. There is not any third or middle way, in which these concerns can be settled. All must have God to deal with them according to the

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* 1 Cor. xv. 47.

first Covenant, unto a suffering of eternal death; or according to the second Covenant,—in being saved unto eternal life, by Grace reigning through the righteousness of the glorious Head of that Covenant. As it is upon one common *covenant-ground*, that sinners are ruined; it is upon one common *covenant-ground*, that some of them are recovered. And now, when the old way of life by the first Covenant is for ever shut up; and a new way of life is opened up by the second Covenant: There remains, therefore, no alternative for sinners,—but to renounce all holding of the first Covenant, and to take hold of the second Covenant for eternal life; or to perish for ever.

INF. VII. *There was never any Good to be looked for from God, but immediately on the Ground of his Promise.*

Goodness is essential to God, a necessary perfection of his nature. But this has never been set forth to either upright or fallen man, as the immediate ground upon which he might look for any good of true blessedness at God's hand: Because, though goodness be essential to God; it is not of a necessary, but of a sovereignly free egress upon creatures:—The first man, as God made him, was good, very good; while an enjoyment of many good things belonged to the constitution of his primitive estate: And he was to look for the continuance of these, and also for additional blessings of goodness,—not immediately on the ground of God's essential goodness; but on the ground of his *promise* in the Covenant of Works.

As that Covenant, with regard to the moral law, was naturally interwoven with his soul; his conscience could as readily dictate a promise from God
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of good, upon his doing good,—as it could dictate a threatening from God of evil, upon his doing evil. Yet he was not left to rest his hope of good on God's promise, merely in this *natural* dictate of it. He had that promise more specially and positively set forth to him, in an article of God's *revealed will*: As it was plainly implied in the penalty under which he was debarred from one tree in the garden; while it was also signified and sealed to him by another tree in it, the sacramental *tree of life*. Thus, all his hope from God, all his dependence upon God for good, even in his primitive estate,—was to proceed immediately upon God's *revealed will* in a way of positive *promise*.

Upon man's fall, all that prospect of good from God, both natural and revealed, was wholly extinguished: No benefit was to be ever had, of the promise belonging to the Covenant of Works. And such is the woful state, in which he left his posterity.—God, indeed, bestows many good things of common providence, upon such as are not seeking or looking to him for the same; and are making no acknowledgment of him, in their use of these common benefits. But such things are not good things to them, as abused by them; nor are they, in their nature, such things as belong to true blessedness,—or effects of God's favour. As to good things of this spiritual and blessing nature, sinful men have no ground at all upon which to look for them,—but God's *promises* in the Covenant of Grace. For any to satisfy themselves with general conclusions from God's being good and merciful in his nature, such conclusions as even innocent man was never immediately to proceed upon,—is to deceive themselves into a most woful and everlasting disappointment. We have no true good to look for at God's hand, but in the way of a special and entire dependence
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on these New-covenant *promises*; which will have a sure and full effect, upon all who have their souls formed into that gracious disposition.

C H A P T E R II.

Of God's Covenant-dealing with the first Man as a public Person.

SOME particular *explanations* are to be made, in this and the following chapters, of several things in the *general view* which has been given. And, in this chapter, God's *Covenant-dealing* with the first man as a *public person* is to be explained; as to the *reality*, the *nature*, and the *propriety* of that dispensation.

S E C T. I.

Of the Reality of God's Covenant-dealing with the first Man, as a public Person.

That God's dealing with the first man was of a *Covenant-nature*, and that he was so dealt with as not only the root but likewise the public summary of mankind,—doth generally appear from the account given of this matter by *Moses*; as hath been set forth in the preceding chapter. But the same thing was more particularly revealed afterwards, in the holy Scripture.—It is not without reason, that God's Covenant with the first man has been inferred from his declaration by the Prophet; *They like men* (on the margin, *like Adam*) *have transgressed*

sed the Covenant *. But the principal evidence, on this subject, arises from the New-Testament; in the *glorious character* of JESUS CHRIST, with the *parallel* betwixt him and the *first man*,—as therein most expressly revealed. And of these matters some particular view is to be proposed.

§ I. With regard to JESUS CHRIST,—no account is to be made here, of those monsters that now abound among professed Christians; who blaspheme the *holy Trinity*, with the proper *divinity* and *mediation* of JESUS CHRIST. But it is to be observed concerning him, that

1st, He is truly God; the *one and only true God*. He is frequently, in Scripture, called God. He is *the true God, and eternal life; over all, God blessed for ever; the blessed and only Potentate* †. And the name JEHOVAH, that incommunicable name of the One Supreme Godhead, belongs to him ‡.—He is possessed of all divine perfections; as *the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God* ||. He is *the mighty God, the everlasting Father; or, Father of eternity* §. He is *the beginning and the ending; which is, and which was, and which is to come; the first and the last; the Almighty* **. And the Scripture abounds with particular ascriptions of divine properties to him.—Moreover, *by him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth; visible and invisible; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: All things were created by him and for him; and he is before all things, and by him all things consist* ††.—Accordingly the call is given concerning him; *let all the Angels of God worship him: And it is required, that at the name of Jesus every knee*

* Hof. vi. 7. † 1 John v. 20.; Rom. ix. 5.; 1 Tim. vi. 15.

‡ Jer. xxiii. 6.; Mal. iii. 1.; iv. 5. || 1 Tim. i. 17.

§ Isa. ix. 6. ** Rev. i. 8.; xxii. 13. †† Col. i. 16, 17.

knee should bow,—and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord; Lord of all.*

2dly, JESUS CHRIST is a *divine Person*, the personal Word of God. There are three that bear record in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: And these three are ONE†. These do not merely agree in one; but they are all *one Being*, one and the same Being, subsisting in *three Persons*. Each of the Persons is *the only living and true God*; and all of them are so, in the same one Godhead. Our Lord avouched this glorious truth concerning himself; *I and my Father are one†*.

He is God, not absolutely, but in the *second Person* of the adorable *Trinity*. He is not merely an attribute or quality of the Godhead, but a *Person* subsisting in it; to whom most distinguishing relations and actions, of the highest importance, are ascribed,—such as the Scripture cannot admit of being ascribed to the Father or Spirit: And which cannot, without gross absurdity, be ascribed to an attribute or quality. He is begotten of the Father, the *Son of God*, by an eternal and necessary generation; deriving from the Father, not *Godhead*, but *Personality*: While he is the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

There is nothing more plainly taught in Scripture, than this mystery of the THREE-ONE, the ONE-THREE-GOD. And it is taught for being *believed* by us, as the glorious and only foundation of the Christian religion; of the whole doctrine of the grace of God, in the salvation of sinners. But it is not taught for being *comprehended* by us, which is impossible. And its being infinitely above the comprehension of finite minds, is no reason why it should be rejected by us. We might well enough assert that it would

* Heb. i. 6.; Phil. ii. 10, 11.; Acts x. 36.

† 1 John v. 7. ‡ John x. 30.

would be a contradiction or absurdity, if one *finite* being were said to subsist in different persons: But we cannot reasonably pretend any such thing, about the doctrine of *different personalities in one infinite Being*; because it is quite irrational to pretend that we may judge of what is competent to such a Being, whom we cannot comprehend. This whole character of Jesus Christ, is merely a matter of *faith*, not of *reason*: Being essential to that doctrine, which we must believe, and be saved; or disbelieve, and be damned.

And it must be grossly unreasonable, as well as impious, to reject the revelation which God has most plainly made to us *that these things are so*; because we cannot find an answer to the question, about *how* these things can be so: While a searching mind must be reduced to an insuperable nonplus, even about the most common things in nature. We have no knowledge about any material substance, or bit of matter, but in its sensible qualities: We know that these qualities are not the substance: Yet what is the substance to which they belong, what it is abstractly from all these qualities,—is quite unintelligible by us. Thus, the most philosophic mind will lose itself, when obstinately searching into the nature of a blade of grass or straw.

3dly, JESUS CHRIST is *God-man*. *The mighty God, the Father of eternity*, in the person of the eternal Son,—became *a Child born, a Son given unto us* *, *The Word, who essentially was God, and personally was with God,—was made flesh, and dwelt among us* †. *God was manifested in the flesh* ‡.—Next the mystery of the *holy Trinity*, is the mystery of the *Incarnation* of the eternal Son. He assumed a true body and a reasonable soul; the whole of what makes a *person* in us: But as assumed by him, it did not make a *person*;

* Isa. ix. 6. † John i. 1, 14. ‡ 1 Tim. iii. 16.

person; having never had any separate or distinct subsistence and agency; or otherwise than as in a state of union with his *divine Person* *. It was therefore the *human nature*, of a public and common relation to mankind-sinners as such (though for the salvation of some only) that he assumed; and not a *human person*, of a private and peculiar relation to any.

And such is the wonderful union of the *divine* and *human* natures in his person, that the peculiarities of each nature are ascribed to the person: What things originally belong to the different natures, are not ascribed separately to these natures; but still to to the *one person* Jesus Christ, God-man. He was still a *divine Person* in the human nature; and what originally belongs to his nature, is affirmed of the divine Person. It is affirmed, that *God laid down his life for us*; and that *God hath purchased the Church with his own blood*; and that the righteousness of his obedience, as made of a woman, made under the law, is *the righteousness of God* †.—Such is the wonderful constitution of his person: From which he is an all-sufficient Saviour; an *infinite* dignity, value and merit, belonging to what he did and suffered in human nature.

4thly, JESUS CHRIST is a *Mediator*. *There is one God; and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus* ‡. In the mysterious constitution of his person, he is a *middle-person* between God and man; being himself both *God* and *man*. And he was most fitly constituted into the *office* of a *Mediator* between

* In us, the *soul* is not now a *person*, as having never had any separate or distinct subsistence; but the soul in union with the body makes the person: At death, the *soul* becomes a *person*; as a separate or distinct rational agent: at the resurrection, the soul will be no longer a person by itself; but only the soul and body as reunited, to continue so for ever.

† John iii. 16.; Acts xx. 28.; Rom. iii. 21. ‡ 1 Tim. ii. 5.

tween God and men: For making up the dreadful breach between these parties; in bringing about a mutual reconciliation, upon honourable and indefensible terms. He thus became a *daysman*, an upmire, or abritrator, to *lay his hand upon both* *.—For, after the transgressing of the Covenant of Works, there could be no longer any friendly intercourse between God and man; according to that Covenant. Man became absolutely set against God, and God against man. And there could be no making up the breach on man's part; yea, so far as depended on him, it could only be more and more widened. Nor could there be any making up of the breach on God's part, consistently with his not denying himself, but through a Mediator; the *one Mediator, the man Christ Jesus*,—of whom God the Father gives this marvellous character, *the Man that is my fellow* †.

5thly, JESUS CHRIST is a *Covenant-mediator*.—One's being simply a mediator between a party offended and a party offending, doth not imply any public capacity. It consists with the mediator being only a private person, using friendly endeavours for reconciling the parties; without making himself any way answerable as a surety, for the offender on whose behalf he mediates.

But it is quite otherwise with the mediation of Jesus Christ. He never existed or acted in it for a moment as a *private person*; or otherwise than in a public capacity. When he was made under the law of the Covenant of Works, it had no sort of demand upon him, but from a gracious constitution. It had a *natural* demand upon a *human person*; but could have no such demand upon a *human nature* subsisting in a *divine person*. And it would be very injurious to the character of Jesus Christ, to allege that he had or could have any thing ado with the

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* Job ix. 33. † Zech. xiii. 7.

law as a private person ; for yielding any obedience to it on his own account. Could *God-man* be a natural subject of that law ? Could this glorious One, whose name is *Wonderful*, be ever for a moment in a private state as a *mere man* ? His having owed any obedience to the law for himself, could not consist with his obeying of it for his people. But this subject may be more particularly resumed in another place.

As he became a Mediator between God and men, it was wholly in a *public capacity*,—as a *Covenant-mediator*. He is expressly called *the Mediator, the Surety of the New Covenant* * : Concerning which the Lord declared by the Psalmist, *I have made a Covenant with my Chosen,—my Covenant shall stand fast with him* †. It was but a very partial allusion which was made in that psalm to the *earthly David*. It is evident, at first view, that many things in it could bear no sort of application, either primary or secondary ; except to him who is the great *Antitype* of the earthly David : A glorious Antitype, who was prophesied of and promised under the same name, some hundreds of years after the typical David had been laid in his grave ; *I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David,—and David my servant shall be King over them* ‡. All this can be understood of none other but *Jesus Christ* ; who was raised up to sit upon *the throne of his father David* ||. With him was the Covenant made, as a *Covenant-mediator*.

It is called *the everlasting Covenant* §. As it is *to everlasting* in its effects, it was *from everlasting* in its constitution. He, as the mediatory Head of this Covenant, *was set up from everlasting* **. And concerning this same Covenant it is declared by the Prophet,

* Heb. xii. 24. ; vii. 22. † Psal. lxxxix. 3, 28.

‡ Ezek. xxxiv. 23. ; xxxvii. 24. || Luke i. 32.

§ Heb. xiii. 20. ** Prov. viii. 23.

Prophet, *the counsel of peace shall be between them both* *; between JEHOVAH and *the man whose name is the BRANCH*, the eternal Father and his eternal Son. God's *eternity*, what we conceive of as both before and after this world, is with him all *one eternity*; without any succession of periods. He is ever the great I AM; *which is, and which was, and which is to come* †. What he *was*, he *is*, and what he *is*, he ever *will be*; *with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning* ‡. The infinite ONE, who can have no succession of ideas or thoughts in his mind, but at once thinks all that is thinkable,—can have no successive duration belonging to him: His *one eternity*, as he at once fully *inhabiteh eternity* ||, must be with him a perpetual present NOW; wholly coinciding with all time, and every part of time. The *counsel of peace*, though held from eternity, comes therefore to be variously considered by us; in our finite view of *past, present, and to come*. As to the *past*, this counsel *was*; as to the *present*, it *is*; as to the future or *to come*, it *shall be*. *The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever*; never broken up, but ever standing: *The thoughts of his heart to all generations*; never passing, but ever permanent §. Wherefore the Prophet's declaration, that the counsel of peace *shall be*, bears no inconsistency with its having been from all eternity: But only respects it as permanently one; the same from eternity, and through time, and to eternity. What it *was* it *is*, and what it *is*, it *shall be*; and shall further *appear* to have been from everlasting,—as a counsel which ever was, and is, and will be held: Like God himself; *which is, which was, and which is to come*. In this *counsel of peace* from all eternity, was the Covenant
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* Zech. vi. 13. † Exod. iii. 14.; Rev. i. 4. ‡ James i. 17.
|| Isa. lvii. 15. § Psal. xxxiii. 11.

of Grace made with Jesus Christ; therein constituted to be a *Covenant-mediator*.

The Covenant of Works was made with the first man, not only for his *posterity*,—but also for *himself*: He had a private interest in it, and dependence upon it, for *his own* enjoyment of eternal life. But the Covenant of Grace was made with Christ, *nowise for himself*; it was wholly for the elect of mankind, who were to become his spiritual seed. For these, he became an undertaking *Surety*, as their *Covenant-head*: Substituted into their place, and representing them all in his own person; for fulfilling the whole righteousness of the Law-covenant, not only on their behalf, but also in their name: While their name was transferred to him; as the Father said to him,—*Thou art my Servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified* *. Their whole debt of obedience to that law, according to the precepts, as the condition of life,—was thus transferred to him: And also their whole debt of *suffering*, according to its incurred penalty; as all their iniquities, in respect of guilt, or subjection thereby to punishment,—were laid, or made to meet upon him †. He, *his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree*,—as he hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust ‡. He was made sin for us,—that we might be made the righteousness of God in him ||. He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth §; who are reckoned of as having obeyed in his obeying, and as having suffered in his suffering; according to their standing in him as their *Covenant-head*, their *Covenant-mediator*.—And for acting most effectually in this capacity, he was infinitely well qualified; in his *Godhead*, his *divine personality*, and his *incarnation*.

§ II.

* Isa. xlix. 3. † Isa. liii. 6. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 24.; iii. 18.
 || 2 Cor. v. 21. § Rom. x. 4.

§ II. The preceding observations concerning JESUS CHRIST are necessary, for illustrating the *parallel* which the Scripture states between him and the *first man*. There is indeed no parallel of their *personal* conditions, which are infinitely different; except their both partaking of human nature. But the parallel is mainly stated in the *public* character of both: The one having been a Covenant-head of his natural seed; and the other being a Covenant-head of his spiritual seed. For if a *Covenant of Grace* was made with CHRIST in the name of his seed, as hath been shown; a *Covenant of Works* must have been made with the *first man* in the name of his seed: Of which we have the following evidences; in a parallel to what has been observed about JESUS CHRIST.

1st, God's Covenant-dealing with the first man as a *public person*, appears from Rom. v. 12. *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.*—This verse, both in the original and translation, is closed with a point of a full pause; as making a complete sentence. Yet the contexture of the language cannot admit of its being considered as such: It is evidently but a part of a sentence; or one half of a sentence in one side of a comparison. And the other side of it, or what is called the *reddition*, is not to be found in the verse next following; neither according to grammatical construction, nor what is there expressed. If we look forward to the 18th verse, which makes a complete sentence by itself, we will find the *matter* of both sides of the comparison: But, though the intermediate verses were to be considered as a parenthesis; yet the 18th verse cannot be brought into grammatical construction with the 12th verse, so as to finish the sentence which (according to our translation) is there only begun.

begun. Were the second *and* thrown out of the 12th verse, it would be thereby reduced to the form of a complete *sentence*: But the *sense* would be thereby lost; and what follows the said *and* is not another side of the comparison, but a continuing of the same.

The natural way of clearing this apparent difficulty in the Apostle's language, is by understanding a supplement to be made of the substantive verb *IT IS*; as being very commonly left to be understood, in the originals of the holy Scripture. The verse would then run thus: *Wherefore IT IS as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.* The supplement thus to be inserted, makes a reference to what the apostle had already said: And so, the other side of the comparison meant in the 12th verse,—is not to be sought in what follows; but in what goes before.

The *one man*, in this text, can only mean the *first man*. The *sin* which is here said to have entered by him, can only be understood of his *first sin*; that sin which did not follow upon, but introduced his subjection to all the threatened death,—with his actual sinking into a state of spiritual death: Even the peculiar sin of his *eating* that fruit which had been forbidden upon the pain of death. By him this sin *entered into the world*, the world of mankind. And by this sin, the *death* which had seized upon himself did likewise enter into the world; so that it *passed upon all men*: All mankind became subjected to death, according to all the extent of the penalty under which the law was given to the first man.

The last clause of the verse, in our translation of it, contains a *reason* for this woful passing of death upon all men; *for that all have sinned*.—The most natural translation of the original words, is that which

we have on the margin ; IN WHOM *all have sinned*. And this signifies that all men have sinned in the *first man*, in his *first sin* ; as the sin, and the only sin, which they all committed in him, according to the standing which they had in him as their Covenant-head : So that the threatened death, as the just merit of this sin, hath passed upon them all.

But the construction may thus appear to be somewhat remote ; in making this last clause to look back immediately upon the *one man* in the beginning of the verse : And there is no necessity for rejecting our translation of that clause ; seeing the sense, in both ways, is precisely the same.—For the *all*, who are said to have sinned, can be none other or fewer than the *all men* in the preceding clause ; not only all the men who existed before and in the Apostle's time, but likewise all who should afterwards exist : And all these are said to *have sinned* already ; which can only be understood of their having done so in the *one man*, as their Covenant-head. Beside, this *having sinned* cannot be understood of any sinning which has *followed* the passing of death (particularly spiritual death) upon all men ; it can only be understood of that sinning which *preceded* and primarily *introduced* this passing of death upon them all : And, therefore, it can only mean the *first sinning* of the *one man* ; all men being considered, as having then sinned in him. By the one man, *sin entered into the world* ; so that, with death, *it passed upon all men* : The sin was the *sin of the world* in him ; as the death is the death of the world through him. The verse before us doth thus bear an ample testimony, by itself,—to the truth of God's Covenant-dealing with the first man as a *public person*, representing all his natural posterity. But this is further evident from the reference, before observed, to the preceding context ; as containing the *other side*

side of the comparison meant in this verse. The glorious method of the recovery of mankind sinners from the ruin of their natural estate, is there set forth: In these declarations, that Christ died for the ungodly,—Christ died for us;—being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him;—we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son,—we shall be saved by his life;—by whom we have now received the atonement; we have received the atonement for sin in his blood, made over unto and bestowed upon us, as our ground of plea for justification, to be sustained as having been made by us in him.

Such is the gracious *method of recovery* by JESUS CHRIST, in the capacity of the Covenant-head of all his spiritual seed. And the Apostle proceeds, in the 12th verse, to represent this case as exactly parallel to the woful *method of ruin* by the *first man*; that it is just as through *one man* death hath passed upon *all men*, as having all sinned in him. And, according to the nature of the comparison,—as the *recovery* is through *one* Covenant headship, the *ruin* must have been through *another* Covenant-headship: That the Covenant of Works having been made with that *one man*, not only for himself, but also for all his natural posterity; they all sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression.

2dly, God's Covenant-dealing with the first man as a *public person*, appears from Rom. v. 13, 14, 17. *For until the law, sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law: Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression:—For if by one man's offence, death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.*

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Until the law, sin was in the world.—That *sin* which entered into the world by *one man*, was still in the world: It was lying, in its guilt, upon the world; being the world's sin, which (as hath been observed) the whole world of mankind had committed in that one man. It was so in the world *until the law*; all along till the external dispensation of the moral law by *Moses*, above two thousand and five hundred years after the entry of that sin. And it was then in the world, so as to be *imputed* unto all those who had sprung from the first man; which could not have been the case, if there had been then no law for the ground of the imputation. But the moral law was otherwise and all along existing, before the special giving of it by *Moses*; as a law which had been originally impressed on the human soul: And considered as a law, the whole of which was broken in the *one sin* committed by the first man as a public person,—his breaking the positive precept.

Thus, though there was no external dispensation of the moral law from *Adam* to *Moses*; yet, *nevertheless*, in virtue of that original state of this law,—*death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression.* And this cannot mean a denying only the *particular similitude* of sinning as he did, in eating the forbidden fruit: For none of his posterity could have sinned in this manner; because, upon his committing that sin, he and they were expelled from all future access to any tree in the garden. Yet, while it is here signified, that *some* of his posterity *had not sinned after the similitude* of his transgression; it is plainly supposed, that *others* of them had done so. And, therefore, the Apostle could only mean the *general similitude* of his sinning; or of his sinning *personally* and *actually*, committing an actual transgression.

Wherefore, by *them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression*, can only be understood *infants*; such as had not arrived at a capacity of personal and *actual* sinning. And it is asserted, that *death reigned* even over these; multitudes whom death had swept away in infancy, according to the common state of generations: But particularly referring to the great destruction of the old world, as also of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, with other cities of the plain; in which a great many infants must have been involved. And the righteous Judge of all the earth could not have proceeded in that manner against them, but upon some guilt which they were lying under; while *death* could have had no passing upon them, but as introduced by *sin*. We are, therefore, necessarily led to consider the death which reigned over them, as still the demerit of the *first sin*; the guilt of which was *imputed* to them, from the *representation* which had been made of them in the committing of that sin.

The amount of the whole is, that by *one man's offence death reigned by one*: By the *one offence* of the *one man*, as the Covenant-head of all his natural posterity, *death reigned*. And this is illustrated, as expressly stated in a parallel with *the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness*—by *one Jesus Christ*. In the context, the Apostle stated the great excellency of the *recovery* by Jesus Christ; as the *ruin* was by the guilt of *one offence*, and the *recovery* is from the guilt of *many offences*: While the recovery is unto a much greater height and glory of happiness than had been originally proposed to man. But still a general *parallel* or correspondence is expressly stated betwixt the *methods* of *ruin* and *recovery*. And while *this* is by Jesus Christ as a *Covenant-head*, that must have been by the first man in the like capacity.

3dly, God's Covenant-dealing with the first man as a *public person*, appears from Rom v. 14. *Who was the figure of him that was to come.*—This character, *him that was to come*, did signally belong to Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah. He said to God the Father, in the counsel of peace from eternity; *Lo, I come, to do thy will* *. Immediately upon the breach of the Covenant of Works, he was promised to come for repairing that breach; as the blessed and blessing Seed of the woman. The promise of his coming was frequently renewed; as a leading article of what was written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms concerning him: Being the principal, and a standing matter of expectation, all along under the Old Testament state. Through the whole course of that dispensation, he was looked for as *he that should come* †; literally, *the Comer*, or, *the coming One*. And now, under the New Testament dispensation, he still bears the same character; with an ultimate respect to his second visible coming ‡: *For yet a little while, and he that shall come (the Comer, the coming One) will come, and will not tarry* ||.

Now, the first man is said to have been *the figure* of him; an eminent *type*, or *pattern*, or *figurative* representation of him. The first man was so, in a perfect distinction from all other mere men. And in what sense was he, or could he be so? In no other imaginable sense, but that of a *public character* belonging to each. Jesus Christ bears the character of a *Covenant-head*, representing all his spiritual seed: And the first man's having been *the figure* of him, must therefore mean,—that this man bore the character of a *Covenant-head*, representing all his natural seed; that he did so while maintaining, and in falling from his primitive integrity.

4thly,

* Psal. xl. 7, 8. † Matth. xi. 3.; Luke vii. 19, 20.

‡ Acts i. 11.; Rev. i. 7. || Heb. x. 37.

4thly, God's Covenant-dealing with the first man as a *public person*, appears from *Rom. v. 18*. *Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation: Even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.*—The different readings in this verse, according to the margin, are of no material consequence; Nor is there any necessity for examining the propriety of the supplements which are made by repetitions from the 16th verse.

It is enough here, to consider the *opposition* which is stated betwixt two matters of the greatest importance; *condemnation*, and *justification*. On the one hand, there is a *condemnation of all men*; which must be taken in a natural sense, as meaning the *all* of Adam's *men*. On the other hand, there is a *justification of all men*; which must be taken in a gracious sense, as meaning the *all* of CHRIST's *men*. The *condemnation* of the one body of all men, is by *the offence of one*; by his *one offence*: And the *justification* of the other body of all men, is by *the righteousness of one*; by his *one righteousness*. There can be no question here, but the singular parties meant are the *first man* and *Jesus Christ*. And while justification comes by the *one righteousness* of JESUS CHRIST, as a *Covenant-head* of all who are graciously justified; so the condemnation must have come by the *one offence* of the *first man*, as the *Covenant-head* of all who are naturally condemned.

5thly, God's Covenant-dealing with the first man as a *public person*, appears from *Rom. v. 19*. *For as, by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners; so, by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.*—The parallel and opposition which had been stated in the preceding verse, between the *first man* and *Jesus Christ*, is continued in this verse; but with a more *immediate* regard to the *Covenant-headship* of each

each: While the *condemnation* and *justification* there mentioned, do suppose and proceed upon the *guiltiness* and *righteousness* here meant; as *first* passing from them, severally, upon their seed. And the headships of both, from which only all these matters can be derived, are here set forth,—as mutually illustrating each other.

By *one man's disobedience many*, even all his natural seed, *were made sinners*; were made so, in respect of guiltiness, by the imputation of his disobedience to them: For in no sense could they be made sinners by his disobedience, but in that of its being reckoned their disobedience in him; that they were made sinners, by their disobeying in his disobeying as their representative.—And to this is answerable the opposite case; that *by the obedience of one*, Jesus Christ, *shall many*, even all his spiritual seed, *be made righteous*: Made so, by the imputation of his obedience to them; it being reckoned their obedience in him, by their having obeyed in his obeying as their representative.—The Covenant-headships of the singular parties here referred to, are therefore equally unquestionable: And the doctrines of both are quite inseparable, in the Christian religion.

6thly, God's Covenant-dealing with the first man as a *public person*, appears from 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22. *For since by, man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead: For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*

These words contain a glorious assurance, that *in Christ shall all be made alive*; the *all* of his spiritual seed. He is *the Prince of life*, or, (as on the margin) *the Author of life* *; of all their new and blessed life. He is *their life* †. His mediatory life is a *public life*, which they have in and with him; *raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places*,

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* Acts iii. 15. † Col. iii. 4.

in Christ Jesus: and thus they have to say, *as he is, so are we in this world* *.—It is through him and from him, that they have a life of *justification*; a life in God's favour; *justification of life*, living as justified persons: Thus *alive in law*; in opposition to their natural estate of being *dead in law*, under condemnation †. It is through and from him that they have a *spiritual* life; *spiritually quickened*, raised up to *walk in newness of life*, as *alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord*: In opposition to their natural estate, of being *dead in trespasses and sins* ‡. It is through him and from him, that there comes to be a blessed *resurrection of the dead*. And he gives unto them *eternal life*; now in the gracious beginning of it, as afterwards in the glorious perfection of it ||. —But he is the head of all this *life* unto them, only as he hath become a head of *righteousness* unto them: He having fulfilled all the righteousness of the law for them, in the Covenant-representation which he made of them; so that his righteousness becomes their righteousness in him.

And this New Covenant state runs parallel to the Old Covenant state of matters, that *in Adam all die*; the *all* of his natural seed. All of them died in him, in the death which he became subjected unto by his first sin. They all became liable to *spiritual* and *eternal death*; and particularly to that cursed *bodily death*, which is the visible representation and pledge of all the other death comprehended in the penalty of the law. He thus became a head of *death* to all his natural posterity: And, in the nature of the thing, as well as according to the parallel; this must have been through his having become a head of *unrighteousness* to them: He having broken the law, the rule of righteousness as the condition of life, in

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* Eph. ii. 6.; 1 John iv. 17. † Psal. xxx. 5.; Rom. v. 18.

‡ Rom vi. 4, 11.; Eph. ii. 1. § John x. 28.

a Covenant-representation which he made of them ; so that his unrighteousness became their unrighteousness in him.—His Covenant-headship is therefore as unquestionable, as that of JESUS CHRIST.

7thly, God's Covenant-dealing with the first man as a *public* person, appears from 1 Cor. xv. 47. *The first man is of the earth, earthy : The second man is the Lord from heaven.*—As to the two most remarkable men here meant ; *the first man* is said to be of the earth, earthy : His body having been formed of the dust of the ground, he soon fell into a state of frailty and mortality, for returning to the dust ; having forfeited, for himself and his posterity, all the happiness which had been promised in the Covenant made with him. *The second man is the Lord from heaven*, the LORD Jesus Christ : Who came from heaven, in respect of the wonderful manifestation which he made of himself on earth in human nature.

These two men could stand in no comparison with regard to their *personal characters* ; being distant as heaven and earth, and different as God and a creature. They appeared on earth, in periods of about four thousand years from each other ; many millions of men having intervened between them : Yet they are called the *first* and *second* man ; which must be in a sense that cannot admit of any *third* man, in the same order. And no reason can be conceived for such designations of them, but in a *public character* belonging to each of these *two men* ; such as cannot be ascribed to any *third man*. The *second man*, *the Lord from heaven*, unquestionably bears such a character as the *Covenant-head* of all elect men : And therefore the *first man* must be considered as having borne such a character, in being the *Covenant-head* of all mere men. No other sense can be put upon the parallel here stated ;
and

and so, the former conclusion comes justly to be repeated; that the *Covenant headship* of the *first man* is as unquestionable, as that of the *second man* the LORD from heaven.

§ III. Upon the whole,—the *Covenant of Works* made with the first man for himself and all his natural posterity, is referred to under the character of the *Old Covenant*; in *Heb. xii. 24. Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant.*

The *one* Covenant of Grace is spoken of in Scripture as being *two*; *Covenants of promise, old and new* *. But this is only with regard to two different administrations of the same one Covenant of Grace, under the Old and New Testaments. And when *Jesus* is called *the Mediator of the New Covenant*, this may have a subordinate respect to the *new administration* of it by the Gospel; as making a more open and glorious display of his mediatory character. Particularly, there may be such respect to it in this new administration,—as distinguished from what is called the *Sinaitic Covenant*: About which various things have been written, not consistent with the analogy of faith, or the general state of scripture-doctrine; and various things, the self-consistence and sense of which seem not to fall within the compass of human understanding. But this is not a place for entering into that subject.

Yet the *one* Covenant of Grace was no less really, however differently, administered under the *Old* Testament than under the *New*. *Jesus, the Mediator* of it under the Gospel, was no less really, however differently, the Mediator of it under the legal dispensation; and was exhibited as such, all along from the revelation made of him and it, to fallen man, in the first promise. When, therefore, the

Covenant

* Eph. ii. 12.; Heb. viii. 13.

Covenant of Grace is called the *New Covenant*; this definition can bear no *complete* sense, but as referring, principally and ultimately, to another as the *Old Covenant*, absolutely different from the Covenant of Grace in every administration of it. If any justice be done to the language,—when *Jesus* is, in a general and absolute manner, called *the Mediator of the New Covenant*; it must be taken as primarily referring to an *Old Covenant*, of which *Jesus* was no wise a Mediator. And this can be no other but the Covenant of Works made with the first man; unto which, as broken, the Covenant of Grace has succeeded.—And while we can now make no proper account of the Covenant of Works, but for leading us forward to the Covenant of Grace; we can make no proper account of the Covenant of Grace, but in its relation to the Covenant of Works. The doctrines of these two Covenants, in the public capacities of the two Covenant-heads,—must be wholly received by us, or wholly rejected; they cannot, consistently, be separated in our acknowledgment.

S E C T. II.

Of the Nature of God's Covenant-dealing with the first Man as a public Person.

§ I. The divine establishment with mankind, in the first man, is what the Scripture calls a *law* *, being naturally a Covenant-law. But it is not, in Scripture, called by the name of a *Covenant*; if not in a text formerly quoted, *they like men* (on the margin *like Adam*) *have transgressed the Covenant* †. However, it is most evidently represented in Scripture, as bearing the *nature of a Covenant*.

It was a real transaction between *two great parties*,

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* Rom. x. 5.; Gal. ii. 21. † Hof. vi. 7.

ties, God and *man*; most proper parties, though infinitely different,—man as nothing to God: Yet the man was the greatest of all mere men, as being wholly an upright man; and comprehending, in himself, all mankind. The transaction was upon a subject of the greatest concern; the everlasting happiness or misery of mankind. On God's part there was a *promise* of eternal life; upon the undertaken *condition*, on man's part of perfect obedience to his law: With a penalty of eternal death, in the event of disobedience. And nothing more could be essential to a proper Covenant.—But the *nature* of this Covenant of Works may be illustrated, by contrasting it with other Covenants mentioned in Scripture.

§ II. According to the most general sense of the word *Covenant* in Scripture, it denotes a divine ordination and *establishment* in the material world. Such was God's Covenant with *Noah*: Establishing with him, and with his seed after him,—and with the fowl, the cattle, and every beast of the earth; that all flesh should not be cut off any more by the waters of a flood, that there should not be any more a flood to destroy the earth*. Such is God's Covenant with day and night, establishing the succession thereof†. And such is God's Covenant for his people,—with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground; establishing for them, a special superiority over all these‡.—But as no undertaking party, nor any subject of undertaking, belong to a Covenant of that sort; it can admit of no comparison with the Covenant of Works.

§ III. The Scripture reveals the precious mystery of the *Covenant of Grace*; which God the *Father* entered

* Gen. ix. 9, 10, 11. † Jer. xxxiii. 25. ‡ Hos. ii. 18.

entered into, from eternity, with his coessential *Son*, —as to become one of the people in a state of incarnation *. And there is a singular agreement of this with the Covenant of Works; as a fulfilling the righteousness, and a satisfying for the breach of the latter, was the proper *condition* of the former. But they differ infinitely, as to the character of the undertaking parties in each; differing likewise, as to the state and number of those for whom they did severally undertake: While the Covenant of Grace had not, as it could not have any *penalty*; because there could be no supposition of any possible failure, on the side of the glorious Undertaker.

§ IV. God made a *Covenant* with *Abraham*, containing promises of great blessings to him and his seed; particularly, an inheritance of the earthly *Canaan*: And likewise a prescription of duties, to be performed on his part †. But this had nothing of the nature of the Covenant of Works: For the performance of these duties was not required, as a condition by which he was to be entitled to the blessings promised; that he might receive them as not of grace, but of debt. He was not justified before God *by works*: The promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham or to his seed *through the law*; but *through the righteousness of faith* ‡. It was, therefore, a peculiar administration of the Covenant of Grace that God entered into with him; by which he was set a looking forward to the promised Messiah and his righteousness, as the great object of his confidence and hope: Not merely for earthly benefits; but mainly for spiritual salvation, to be fully enjoyed in the heavenly Canaan §. And his works of obedience were no wise the procuring

* Psal. lxxxix. 3, 28. † Gen. xv. 1, 2, 3, 7.; xvii. 1,—13.

‡ Rom. iv. 2, 13. || John viii. 56.; Heb. xi. 13,—16.

curing or meritorious cause of his enjoying the promised blessings, according to the tenor of the Covenant of Works; but they were the gracious consequence of his believed interest in all these blessings, upon the ground of the Covenant of Grace.

§ V. God made a *Covenant* with Israel at *Sinai*. Many things pertaining to the Sinaitic dispensation, with many erroneous or groundless notions which have been broached concerning it,—are not necessary for being considered in this place. But the following observations may be made here on that subject.

1st, The whole *moral law* was dispensed from *Sinai*, as summed up in ten commandments; by a most awful proclamation which the Lord made of it, and by his miraculous writing of it upon two tables of stone: Being thus dispensed as a *Covenant-law*, or in the form of the *Covenant of Works* *.

The same law, in the same form, had been materially impressed upon the soul of upright man in his creation; written upon the fleshly tables of his heart: And, all along till now, his posterity had been naturally under it as the law of a broken Covenant; known to them, in the remains of its natural impression upon their hearts. But now, this law was brought into an external dispensation, and in a perfect state; still in its original form as a *Covenant-law*: According to the declaration which God made, concerning his statutes and judgments in that law; *which if a man do, he shall live in them*. Moses was then describing the righteousness which is of the law; *That the man which doth these things shall live by them*: Being the same law, which is not of faith; *but the man that doth them shall live in them*.

And indeed, as may be explained in another place,

* Exod. xx. 1,—17.; Deut. iv. 13.; ix. 9, 11.; Lev. xviii. 5.; Ezek. xx. 11, 13, 21.; Rom. x. 5.; Gal. iii. 12.

place,—the *moral law* doth always retain its *Covenant-form*, as what it cannot possibly be divested of, in every natural state of it; or, in all those apprehensions of it which are natural to the hearts of men,—and as it lies in any state of external dispensation: It never is nor can be divested of its *Covenant form*, but unto true believers in Christ; who are blessed with a supernatural writing of it in another form upon their hearts, as they are brought to a dependence upon his fulfilling of it for them in its *Covenant-form*.

2dly, In dispensing the moral law from Sinai, the LORD was not *renewing* the Covenant of Works with Israel. It was not capable of renovation, as it had never been antiquated for one moment. It was still a commanding and cursing law, upon the whole posterity of the first man in their natural estate; without any abatement of that force and vigour which it came to have upon himself, in the moment of his fall: So that the people of Israel were naturally in a state of actual subjection to its curse; not only as breakers of it in their first Covenant-head, but as likewise chargeable with manifold breaches of it in their own persons.

And a supposition of God's *renewing* * the Covenant of Works with them at Sinai, would imply some very monstrous absurdities:—That God had
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* The *renewing of a covenant*, in the general sense of that phrase, means the reviving and applying of a former engagement. But there could have been no *peculiarity*, in God's renewing the Covenant of Works with *Israel* at *Sinai*,—according to the general sense of the phrase; as it could mean no more than the work of conviction, which sinners are still brought under by the law: For *what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.* A supposition, therefore, of God's renewing the Covenant of Works with Israel at *Sinai*, in any *peculiar* manner,—could only mean a laying aside the *old* state, and setting up a *new* state of that Covenant.

first absolved them from the original curse of the Covenant of Works, and all its original obligation upon them; to pave the way for their entering into it with him of new, as upon terms of mutual and absolute friendship: That the law, upon this superseding of all its former claims, was then designed for giving eternal life to them; upon condition of their future and perfect conformity to it: And that God did hold this Covenant-dealing with that sinful people, absolutely incapable of compliance with it; even when declaring them at the same time, over and over, to be an unrighteous,—a *rebellious and stiff-necked people* *.

The truth of the case is,—that the Covenant-law was given to them from Sinai, in a very singular manner; with peculiar and most tremendous circumstances: But, as to the nature of that dispensation of the law, it was the very same which still takes place, in the scriptural state of it,—with regard to all the members of the visible Church, while only bearing that character.

3dly, The people of *Israel*, at *Sinai*, were under an administration of the *Covenant of Grace*.—The administration which had been made of it to Abraham, for himself and his seed, was still in force concerning them; no way made of none effect, by the law now dispensed unto them †. The passover had been instituted about three months before; in virtue whereof, he that destroyed the first-born in Egypt did not touch them: By which they were directed to a dependence, for everlasting salvation, upon the promised seed of the woman, *as their pass-over to be sacrificed for them*; according to the Covenant of Grace †. And in the preface to the ten commandments, the LORD expressly revealed himself

* Exod. xxxii. 9.; xxxiii. 5, 6.; xxxiv. 9.; Deut. ix. 5, 6, 7.

† Gal. iii. 17. ‡ Exod. xii.; 1 Cor. v. 7.

self to them as *their God and Redeemer* * ; which he was, only according to the Covenant of Grace. And the moral law was then accompanied, even incorporated with a system of ceremonial and typical ordinances; particularly of sacrifices, typifying the great atonement to be made for sin by the death of Christ: All which ordinances were full of gospel to them, according to the Covenant of Grace. And the Lord promised unto them upon the matter, what was more expressly promised afterwards; even that supernatural writing of the law on their hearts, in which it was to be divested of its Covenant-form to them,—remaining only as a rule of life for their sanctification, while justified in the way of the Covenant of Grace †.

4thly, Israel was formed, at *Sinai*, into a *peculiar* people; as both a church and nation, distinct from all other people: And God renewed with them his *Covenant* for them with their fathers, concerning their possession of the earthly Canaan. This possession was to be held, according to his promise; through their maintaining, in that land, the whole system of his worship and laws,—in the ceremonial, and typical, and judicial ordinances which he established among them ‡. But in that peculiar Covenant, there was an administration to them of the Covenant of Grace: As it referred typically to the heavenly Canaan; the possession of which, according to other typical ordinances, was to be enjoyed upon the great condition to be fulfilled by the undertaking Surety of that Covenant.

5thly, The people of Israel did greatly *mistake* and *misbehave*, with regard to the whole dispensation which they were then brought under.—The law, the Covenant-law, *was added, because of transgression*;

* Exod. xx. 2. † Deut. xxx. 6.; Jer. xxxi. 33.

‡ Exod. xxxiv. 10,—27.; Levit. xxvi.

sion ; it entered, that the offence might abound* : That the offence, in the transgressions of that law, might abound more than ever before,—in the knowledge and acknowledgment thereof. That law was therefore given to them, for serving the same purpose which it doth still ; as *by law is the knowledge of sin* †. It was to serve for discovering to them their natural ruin, their miserable and perishing condition under the broken Covenant of Works ; and for shutting them up to a dependence upon the remedy, set forth to them, in that administration of the Covenant of Grace which they were then likewise blessed with. Their proper business with the Covenant law, was therefore just the same as that of sinners still ; while the same law is still dispensed for conviction, in a subserviency to the gospel.

But the body of that people, without any proper insight into the mystery of the Covenant of Grace, as then administered to them,—did undertake, most ignorantly and vainly, to fulfil the moral law in its Covenant-form ‡ ; instead of taking up their dependence upon the real and absolute fulfilling of it by the great Mediator, which was set forth to their faith by the instituted sacrifices. And so, the case was then the same with them as afterwards ; that *Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness : Wherefore ? because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law* ||.

Upon the publication which was made of the law to them, they said,—*all that the Lord hath said we will do, and be obedient* : And the Lord answered,—*they have well said, all that they have spoken* ; he could not but approve of what they said, as to the matter of it, even a full conformity to his law. But he

* Gal. iii. 19. ; Rom. v. 20. † Rom. iii. 20.

‡ Exod. xxiv. 4, 7. || Rom. ix. 31, 32.

he immediately added, *O that there was such an heart in them* * ! And so, though their words were good, *their heart was not right with him* : They were but going about to establish their own righteousness.

The law, as dispensed from Sinai, was *ordained by angels in the hand of a Mediator* †.—It was then ordained through a ministry of *angels*, in the tremendous circumstances of that dispensation. If the *Mediator* in whose hand it was ordained be understood of *Moses*, though he is not so called any where else in Scripture ; and who was a mediator but in a very partial sense, as an intervening messenger betwixt God and the people : Yet he was to be considered as typical of JESUS CHRIST, the one, complete, and effectual Mediator of the New Covenant. If HE therefore was not *immediately*, he was *ultimately* meant, as the *Mediator* in whose hand the law was ordained. He who afterwards *ascended on high*, and *received gifts for men*,—was *among them in Sinai*, with *thousands of angels* ‡ : So that they had the law dispensed to them in the hand of this glorious Mediator. Now (as immediately follows the first quotation in this paragraph), *a mediator is not a mediator of one ; but God is one* : A mediator can only be between parties at variance. In the present case, *God* is mentioned as *one* party ; and, seeing a *mediator* is spoken of, *another* party must be understood. The people of Israel were the other party ; to whom the law was dispensed in the hand of that Mediator, the one blessing Seed promised to Abraham || They had therefore to consider him as the great Mediator between God and them : And to take the law as in his hand ; as a law to be fulfilled by him for his people in its Covenant-form, even to an undergoing all the penalty of it for them.—But, instead

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of

* Exod. xxiv. 7. ; Deut. v. 27, 28, 29. † Gal. iii. 19.

‡ Psal. lxxviii. 17, 18. || Gen. xxii. 18.

of this, they themselves vainly undertook to fulfil it; going about to establish their own righteousness.

§ VI. There is a covenant of *men's making with God*: And that either *conjunctly* or *separately*, public or private.

1st, There is a *public* covenant made with God; by a number of persons conjunctly, in a Church-state: Which, in the nature of it, is no more than an explicit and formal solemnity of their Christian profession, on particular occasions; in *swearing it to the LORD of hosts*.

It is essential to the character of Christians, in a Church-state,—that they make a profession of their faith in Christ, and obedience to him: Which profession, if properly made by them, must carry in it a stated opposition to the errors and wickedness of the time in which they live. And the singular prevalence of these evils, in some periods, requires that peculiar solemnity of the Christian profession. There are manifold examples, precepts, and promises in Scripture, warranting and requiring such public covenanting,—both under the Old and New Testaments; a particular consideration of which belongs not to the present design. It may be enough here that a reference be made to the practice of the Jewish Church in the days of *Nehemiah*: When upon a day of solemn fasting, no way by Mosaical or legal institution,—and so not as a Jewish Church, but simply as a church; after an *Acknowledgment of public sins*, they said,—*and because of all this, we make a sure covenant* *.

Such a covenant no way interferes with the Covenant of Grace; as it means not a laying any new ground of dependence and expectation before God:

It

* Nehem. ix. 38.

It only means a solemn avouching of the Lord and engagement to him, upon the ground of his Covenant of Grace. And so, it is altogether different from the Covenant of Works: As the engagement unto, and performance of duties, is not any condition of obtaining life from God; but is a consequence of embracing the gift of life in the Covenant of Grace, and of dependence on the promises of that Covenant. Salvation, as all of grace, no way supercedes,—but mightily enforces the obligations of homage to God, in all Christian duties.

2dly, There is a *private* covenant made with God, by individual persons separately; what is called *personal covenanting*: And it may be done, by taking hold of God's Covenant of Grace and vowing universal obedience to him,—in a written and subscribed deed. Nor doth this mean any more, than a formal expression of that engagement to God, in a dependence upon his Covenant of Grace,—which belongs to the exercise of saving faith.

Yet there is a reason to apprehend,—that this way of personal covenanting is often, if not mostly mismanaged: And various forms of such a *personal covenant* have been proposed by different writers, of a tendency to mislead Christians,—as to their method of dealing with God about their souls.

If the personal covenanting be set about, in the case of a troubled conscience, as a mean of getting it pacified, under an apprehension of peace and acceptance with God,—yea, as a mean of obtaining a saving interest in Christ: Let this be done in ever so evangelic-like a manner, it is but some sort of an attempt to repair the breach of the Covenant of Works; a going about, however speciously, to establish the person's own righteousness,—a seeking righteousness, *as it were* by the works of the law. For still, the person will have some respect to his own covenant,

nant, and his felt attainment as to proper exercise in making it; as the *immediate* ground of that settlement which his soul is brought into, about his saving interest in God's Covenant of Grace.—Then only is personal covenanting rightly managed, when a person is thereby devoting himself to the LORD *as his God*: With his conscience purged from guilt and pacified, by faith's application of the blood of Christ; his soul at rest in God, according to the New Covenant, about all his spiritual and everlasting concerns; and his heart under a sweet constraint of Christ's believed love to him;—with a fire of love and gratitude in his heart to Christ, taking effect in a gracious engagement for living unto him. And perhaps, for guarding against every Old Covenant way of it,—personal covenanting may be more properly reduced to pourings out of the heart before God in prayer.

§ VII. There is a *covenant* of mens making among themselves; as that betwixt *Abraham* and *Abimelech* *. And this was a covenant according to the strictest sense of the word: In which both parties were of the same nature, and mutually independent of each other; the party to whom the covenant was proposed being at liberty to chuse, or refuse it.

But the case was extremely different, as to the Covenant of Works: In which the parties were of natures infinitely distinct; and the man was in a state of absolute dependence on God, at no liberty to chuse or refuse his part of the Covenant. Yet this was every way consistent with the general nature of a covenant; as it means a promise to be fulfilled, upon a condition to be performed: Seeing the man's consent was essentially implied in his primitive integrity; both as to the condition required, and the promise made.

* Gen. xxi. 27, 32.

made. That integrity could not admit of any choice, whether or not he should obey his LORD Creator; and as little, whether or not he should embrace the promised continuance and advancement of his happiness: All such freedom of choice being anticipated, by a consent which necessarily belonged to the uprightness of his nature.

S E C T. III.

Of the Propriety of God's Covenant-dealing with the first Man, as a public Person.

ALL God's ways of dealing are proper, because they are his ways. Whatever he doth is proper, because he doth it; and whatever he wills is proper, because he wills it: For he is *a God of truth, and without iniquity; just and right is he* *. But a propriety of his Covenant-dealing with the first man, and even as a public person, may be likewise observed in the very nature of it. As,

§ I. Man's primitive estate was not, yea could not be designed for his ultimate estate.—He had the life of an immaterial and immortal soul, to endure for ever: But he had likewise an *animal life*; which could not, in its nature, admit of eternal duration. It would be absurd to suppose an eternity of eating and drinking, with other carnal exercises belonging to that kind of life; and an eternity of annual productions from the earth, for serving those purposes. Some continuance of such a life, with him and his posterity, was indeed necessary for the production of all the human kind. But, according to that constitution of which God was freely pleased to make him, it was no less necessary that this way of life should

* Deut. xxxii. 4.

should at length come to a period: That he should be advanced to an immediate enjoyment of God for ever, without any further intervention of those carnal exercises which belonged to his animal life.

Yet his prospect of this advancement, which was even a natural prospect, could only be through a course of perfect obedience to the divine will, according to the law of his creation; while God should be pleased to continue him in a state of trial, before bringing him into a state of confirmation. But, by his having such a prospect upon that condition, the law of his creation was really a Covenant of Works. And,

§ II. God did not see meet to produce all mankind at once, as he did the myriads of angels: But they were to be brought into being, through a course of successive generations; and the first man was to be the natural root of the whole. It was therefore most proper,—that God's settlement with him, about his eternal state, should include all his natural posterity; as being all in his loins. That God should have gone through a course of such settlements distinctly, with each of those in their generations, making a new Covenant of Works with each,—could not consist with any apprehensions which we can have of the divine wisdom; as not consisting with their state of propagation from the first man. And therefore it was most proper, that their natural root should be also their representing head in the Covenant of Works,

§ III. Supposing that all the individuals of mankind could have been brought successively into being without original sin; and that God had been to deal with them *severally* (as with angels), from their not being united in any Covenant-state: It is not however
supposable,

supposeable, that he could design to leave the whole human kind, more than the whole angelic kind, to fall into and perish in a state of sin and misery; nor to uphold them from doing so, more than all the angels. Thus, there would have come to be a succession of one sort of human persons *absolutely sinless*, and another sort of human persons *absolutely sinful*,—all on the same earth, through a course of ages: Persons whose conditions would have been so absolutely different and opposite, as could have admitted of no intermixture in human society; no cohabitation in one world, though there was but one in which they could be propagated! It was therefore most proper, that the world should have been as it actually is; through the connection of all mankind with the first man as their Covenant-head.

And this actual state of mankind, as having all sinned and fallen, by one common ruin, in the breach of one Covenant,—is what God has ordered for the glory of his absolute sovereignty, as also of his infinite grace and wisdom; in a subservience to the mysterious recovery of some, by one common salvation, upon the ground of another Covenant: While the difference betwixt saints and sinners, in the present state of the world, is not absolute or perfect; so as to exclude their associations, in domestic and civil fellowship.

CHAPTER III.

Of the Covenant of Works in its natural State.

§ I. **G**OD made man upright; in a state of perfect opposition to all those sinful inventions which he afterwards sought out *. *God created man in his own image; in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness* †. The man was therefore endued, in his creation, with a knowledge of God's will, according to all the extent of the *moral law*; and in a state of perfect inclination towards a compliance with it. This law was *natural* to him; it was an ingredient of his upright nature, it was written in his heart, it was interwoven with all the powers of his soul. His *reason* fully dictated this law to him; his *conscience* fully ratified it; his *will* did wholly embrace it; and all his *affections* were in a perfect conformity to it.—Such was the original state of the moral law, as perfectly impressed on human nature. And of this natural impression, there are still some remains on every soul; so that *the Gentiles do by nature the things contained in the law,—which shew the work of the law written in their hearts* ‡.

§ II. Man was laid under the moral law in his creation, not simply *as a law*; consisting only of precepts, with a penalty. In this simple state, it was never impressed upon him, or any way dispensed to him, for one moment. It was originally in him as a *Covenant-law*, a *Covenant of Works*. This Covenant was, immediately after his creation, brought into a very new state; by God's bringing him to the

* Eccl. vii. 29. † Gen. i. 27; Col. iii. 10.; Eph. iv. 24.

‡ Rom. ii. 14, 15.

the test of a positive precept: But it was not in this transaction, that the moral law became vested with a Covenant-form. It was in man originally, as a law *which could have given life*; carrying in it this notification about the works of it, *the man that doth them shall live in them* *: And so, it had a *promise* as well as a *penalty*; making it a Covenant †.

Accordingly, the moral law, in the remaining impression of it on human nature,—doth still exhibit eternal life according to that Covenant, as to be obtained by the deeds of the law: And our Lord sustained the truth of this natural dictate concerning it, when he said,—*if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments* ‡.

And that the Covenant of Works was a *natural* Covenant to the first man, an ingredient of his nature,—is demonstratively evident from the natural state of every man's heart. There is, in all, a natural marriage and attachment to the law as a Covenant, for obtaining eternal life by their obedience to it. But no such thing could be natural to any heart,—no such thing as *legality*, or *legal bias* toward a doing for life, in opposition to a believing on Christ for life; were not the Covenant of Works such a *natural Covenant* as hath been declared.

§ III. The Covenant of Works, considered in its *natural* state, was not made with the first man as a *public person*. He was constituted as the Covenant-head of all his natural posterity, by a positive dispensation which God brought him under immediately

* Gal. iii. 12, 21.

† There was never any law given, which could give life to *sinful* man: But such was the law given to *innocent* man; having become *weak* for that purpose only *through the flesh*, the corruption of his nature, *Rom. viii. 3*.

‡ Matth. xix. 16, 17.

ately after he was created ; so that this public state of the Covenant of Works was not *natural* to him : It was not a natural dictate of his reason and conscience ; but wholly founded in that positive dispensation. He was naturally under the Covenant of Works in a private state, only for himself : As his being the natural root of his posterity could not *necessarily* infer, that he should be also their Covenant-head.—Accordingly, he fell from his public character of Covenant-headship, by breaking the positive precept : Whereas, if that character had been natural to him, or had belonged to the natural state of the Covenant of Works ; he could not have fallen from it, but by an entire destruction of the Covenant-law in his heart,—even a destruction of his rational nature. The natural impression of that law on his heart, could not dictate his being thereby in any public station ; more than the remains of it in each of its posterity, can dictate their being severally in any such condition.

§ IV. The first man was endued with a *sufficient capacity*, for fulfilling the righteousness of that Covenant-law under which he was made. There was no defect in his knowledge of it ; and no defect in his inclination toward it, nor any contrary principle in his nature : So that he had a sufficient capacity of soul, for maintaining a course of perfect obedience to this law ; while he had a sufficient capacity of body, for all external actions belonging to that obedience. He was then in a full capacity for all the moral exercises of a spiritual life ; such as healthy and vigorous men are still in, for all the natural exercises of their animal life,—according to their pleasure.

§ V. This sufficient capacity which man was endued

dued with, as a *habit* of his soul, was not sufficient for an *actual* maintaining of his integrity: He moreover needed a continual and unremitted influence of divine power on his soul, for carrying out the habit into *exercise*, as to every particular act of obedience.

This arises from the necessary, absolute, and immediate dependence of all things on God. He is *above all, and through all, and in all*: He giveth (continually giveth) *to all life, and breath, and all things*: For in him we live and move, and have our being *. As no creature hath a *self-existence*, so no creature hath a *self-sufficiency* for even one moment's preservation of its existence; nor even for the drawing of one breath, or the performing of any one motion,—as of itself. God's enduing of creatures with habits, leaves them still under a necessity of the continual and immediate influence of his power, for an actual exercise of these habits.

So it is, in all the concerns of human life. As we cannot for a moment *be* of ourselves, we cannot for a moment *act* of ourselves; or otherwise than as continually subsisting in God, and consisting by him †. We are in a continual dependence every moment upon the God who made us, for maintaining us both in being and acting. And to entertain any different apprehensions of God, is, upon the matter, to exclude him from his own world; from his continual preserving and governing of all his creatures, and all their actions: As if, upon enduing them with habits, he had only to behold how they will exercise the same; without any need of his influence upon them for doing so, or without any dependence on him in their actings. The SUPREME BEING must still be the *first* cause, and an
immediate

* Eph. iv. 6.; Acts xvii. 25, 28.

† Col. i. 17.

immediate cause, of all effects in the world which he made and upholds,—as of him, and through him, and to him, are all things * ; yet without being the author of creature-evil, about the moral circumstances of these effects.

But this divine influence upon the actual exercise of a good habit, is wholly a matter of God's sovereign pleasure. He cannot withdraw the good habit once bestowed, without some provocation by the creature for doing so ; as this could not consist with his own unchangeable goodness : But he can supersede or suspend that immediate influence, for carrying out the habit into proper exercise,—according to his absolute sovereignty. And the rational creature suffers no defect in this case, but such as lies in a wrong turn of his own free pleasure.

§ VI. While man was *upright* in his primitive estate, he was likewise *fallible*. Natural infallibility is a distinguishing prerogative of Godhead : and, therefore, could not be made a natural property of any creature. The angels were naturally fallible ; and, accordingly, many of them soon fell. The only infallibility which is competent to rational creatures, made upright,—is what the LORD graciously superadds to the integrity of their natures : When he is pleased to bring them under a sovereign constitution, for establishing and upholding them in their integrity ; or to bring them into a state of *confirmation*. So it was that he appears to have dealt with all the angels now in heaven,—immediately upon their not concurring in the very early apostasy which was made by many once of their number. And this confirmation bears an assurance to the upright creature, endued with a capacity of standing,—that the
divine

* Rom. xi. 36.

divine influence, through which only this *capacity* can be still exerted unto an *actual* standing,—shall never be superseded or suspended; and that, thus, he shall never be left to fall.—But such a confirmation and assurance, though bestowed upon the redeemed from among men, did not belong to man's primitive estate.

§ VII. Had the first man been continued under the Covenant of Works at large, according to its natural state; his situation would have been extremely difficult and hazardous. He must have been in a fallible condition, equally and immediately as to every article of the moral law; with a tempting devil ready to catch at every opportunity against him. He must therefore have been in a state of liability to *successful* temptation in every place, and at every time, with regard to every sin. His hazard of this would have been at all hands, on all occasions; according to the multiplicity of objects continually encompassing him, which might have been used as matters of temptation. And supposing that this might have been the case through all the course of the *animal life* in this world, never to be brought to a state of confirmation during that manner of life; he must have been for many years, for ages, in a state of continual jeopardy,—without one moment's respite from the danger of falling.

C H A P T E R IV.

Of the Covenant of Works in its positive State.

§ I. **T**HE Covenant of Works was not left with the first man in its *natural* state, but was brought into a *positive* state; by the dispensation of a positive law, about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. As hath been formerly considered *, —his fulfilling of that positive law was made, to him, the *immediate condition* of the Covenant of Works. The whole concerns of his *life* and *death* were brought to turn immediately upon the hinge of his *not eating* or *eating* of the fruit of that tree. The determination expressed to him, *in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*,—could not be understood by him, but as meaning an assurance of that being the case.

§ II. The Covenant of Works was very quickly turned into that positive state unto the first man. It was on the very day of his creation: And the positive law appears to have been given to him, so soon as he was formed into the state of a rational agent. There is no reason, as it doth not seem consistent with an uniformity of God's procedure concerning him,—to suppose that, when so formed, he was for one moment in a *private station*, under the Covenant of Works as merely a natural Covenant; or could have his first obedience to perform under it in that character: But his very first offsetting in an active obedience to his LORD-Creator, was to be in maintaining a regard unto the positive law then given to him.

§ III.

* Chap. I. Sect. III. § V, VI.

§ III. By this positive law, or the special form which the Covenant of Works was thus brought into; the first man was put into the state of a *public person*, a *Covenant-head* of all his natural posterity. It is evident that God's dealing with him, on that occasion, was a dealing with mankind in him*; as being all represented by him, not naturally, but in that positive state of the Covenant of Works. Accordingly, *his sinning* came to be *their sinning* in him; *by his disobedience they were made sinners*, and in him they died†. But this was peculiar to his *first sin*, of eating the forbidden fruit: This being the *only sin* which he was liable to a committing of as his *first sin*; and in the committing of which he fell from his Covenant-headship, while it was the only sin committable by him in that capacity.

§ IV. This positive state of the Covenant of Works, is wholly a matter of *revelation*. The first man had not, nor could have any *natural* apprehension of it,—or of any evil, in eating the fruit which was forbidden: Because the evil of doing so had no reason for it in the nature of the thing, but only in the mere good pleasure of God; which he could not know but by a revelation of it to him, when he was created. And this revelation was expressly made to him so soon as his understanding was formed for receiving it.—Nor could we have any notion of this whole matter, otherwise than by a revelation which is made of it to us. The Covenant of Works, according to its natural state, has a place in the natural dictates of reason and conscience: But the positive state of it, in God's dealing with the first man, is wholly a matter of divine testimony in the Scriptures.

§ V.

* Chap. I. Sect. II. § VI. † Chap. II. Sect. I. § II.

§ V. God's bringing the Covenant of Works into that positive and revealed state, was a most favourable dispensation; containing a very eminent display of his SINGULAR GOODNESS. For,

1st, By the positive state of the Covenant of Works with the first man, there was a most favourable *abridgment* of his *natural fallibility*. As hath been observed, this fallibility was at large, according to the whole extent of the moral law. He was in a state of very hazardous liableness to *successful* temptation, as to every duty,—and every where, and every moment; so long as he should not be brought into a state of confirmation. But, by the aforesaid positive dispensation, his fallibility was *confined*, at first instance, to the single point of his behaviour about the forbidden fruit. The assurance given him, that in *eating* he should *die*,—could mean nothing less, than that in *not eating* he should *not die*: That all his hazard of dying was confined immediately, to his eating; and so, that all his hazard of sinning was likewise confined, immediately, to the committing of that sin.

Thus, he was brought into a *conditional* state of *confirmation*, with regard to the whole *moral law*. He was not in any hazard of being successfully tempted to any breach of it, but in and through a breaking of the positive precept; while, in breaking of this, he would become a breaker of that whole law. And so, upon condition of his not breaking the positive precept, and the moral law in it,—he was confirmed against any immediate breach of this law; that, however much he could be tempted to transgress any article of it, the temptation could not be *successful*: God being graciously engaged by the positive dispensation, in the very nature of it,—never to suspend the divine influence through which he would *actually*

actually stand as to all moral duties; so long as he should not fall, by eating the forbidden fruit.

And the confining of his hazard immediately to that point, was particularly favourable; as he must thus have always seen where, and where only his hazard did lie: And that he was in no hazard of death, through a being successfully tempted to any sin, so long as he should keep clear of the forbidden fruit. It was likewise particularly favourable,—that the *test* which he was thus brought under of absolute submission to the mere will of God, was the *easiest* imaginable: An abstaining from the fruit of a particular tree, which had no particular excellency in it; and which he could never find the smallest need of, being otherwise most abundantly supplied by many trees in the garden.

2dly, By the positive state of the Covenant of Works with the first man, there was a most favourable *confinement* of human fallibility—*immediately to himself*. As he was the Covenant-head of all his natural posterity, their standing or falling was to be *immediately in him*. In his falling, all of them fell; and if he had stood, all of them would have stood also. It is grossly absurd, as absolutely inconsistent with his Covenant-representation,—to imagine that any of them could have been left to fall, but in and through his falling; or that any of them could have been left to a sinning for themselves, without first sinning in him.

Had he stood out, in fulfilling the righteousness of the Covenant which he was under, and which they were under in him; had he so stood till he had been brought into a state of confirmation, the condition of that Covenant being fulfilled: All his posterity must have been confirmed in and through him, according to the essential nature of the Covenant; they having to stand in a state of confirmation, upon the

fulfilled condition of his Covenant-righteousness. They would have been as much obliged as ever he was, to maintain a perfect conformity to the *moral law*, (the law of the positive precept, in the case supposed, being come to an end); and would have as perfectly done so: Yet not a conformity to it as a *Covenant-law*, but only as a rule of righteousness. For their standing in a state of confirmation, as actually and absolutely entitled to eternal life, would have been still upon the ground of the fulfilled condition of the Covenant in his *public righteousness*; not on that of any personal righteousness of their own, which could not have come in for any share in the condition of that Covenant.—And so, the case would have been parallel to what actually takes place in the New Covenant; with regard to the glorious Head of this Covenant, and his spiritual seed.

3dly, By the positive state of the Covenant of Works with the first man, his state of trial was determined to an *early conclusion*. The angels were at first in a state of trial. But this was for a very short time,—for a few days at most; many of them having fallen before the sixth day of the creation was over, though they appear to have been created but on the second*: Immediately upon which, all the rest were put into a state of confirmation. And it is not reasonable to suppose, that God could design to deal more severely with the first man; by continuing him, for any long time, in his state of trial.

Moreover, from the nature of that dispensation which he was under,—his state of trial must have been over, so soon as he could have no further concern with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And this might have been different ways: By God's being pleased to dispose of him at a distance
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* Psal. civ. 4.

from it; or to blast it, as he once did a fig tree, causing it to become barren.

Besides, according to the nature of that dispensation which he was under,—man's state of trial was to have been over, before he could have any offspring. For the entry of sin into the world, through a breach of the Covenant of Works, could not have been by any of them at first instance; but only by him with whom that Covenant was made: And none of them could be in a state of confirmation, while he continued in a state of trial: And it could not have consisted with any revealed measures of the divine equity, that they, continuing upright, should have been left to an uncertain dependence on his doing so; or to have perished, in a state of personal innocence, by his fault,—when they were come to act for themselves. From such considerations it appears, that, in the nature of the case, his state of trial was then determined to an early conclusion.

CHAPTER V.

Of the Breach of the Covenant of Works.

AN account of that most important and dismal event, is given in the third chapter of *Genesis*. It is not proposed here, to explain all the particulars of that account. Much less is it proposed, to meddle in some curious questions which have been started; about the particular kind of serpent there mentioned, with the character given of it,—as also, about its original form and posture: And about how the woman could be imposed upon (while innocence could

could not admit of her being terrified), by the unnatural novelty of a serpent's speaking. It becomes us to acquiesce in the divine testimony, of *what* was then the state of matters; without dealing in vain enquiries, about *how* it could be so. And the following things are submitted to consideration.

§ I. The breach of the Covenant of Works was very *early*. Immediately upon its being made with the *man*, the *woman* was formed out of him: And this was on the sixth day of the creation; that very day, *male and female created he them* *. After the divine establishment with them, as the Covenant was made with both,—there is no instance recorded of any moral acting on their part, before the breach of the Covenant; this appears to have been the very first step of their actual dealing with God as their Sovereign LORD.

The Psalmist makes an observation; *man in honour abideth not* †. These words translated *abideth not*, strictly mean *nighteth not*,—*passeth not a night*: which is not literally true of men, as to their common state of earthly honour; denoting only a very uncertain and short continuance in it. But there seems to be no reason, why these words may not be considered as alluding to the condition of the first man,—in their strictest sense; of his not passing a night, or getting over to the first Sabbath, in the honour of his innocent state. And it seems too much for us, to affirm an impossibility,—that all these transactions concerning him could have passed in one day: More than others concerning our LORD, in as short a time before his burial.

§ II. The breach of the Covenant of Works was by *eating the forbidden fruit*. This was a most wo-
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* Gen. i. 27. † Psal. xlix. 12.

ful abolishing of that Covenant, in its *positive state*; which immediately ceased to be of any more existence. And the particular breach of it in its positive state, comprehended an universal breach of it in its *natural state* also *. By that *eating*, there was a direct trampling upon God's authority in the *positive law*; a total rejection of his absolute sovereignty: And so, it was a material breach of the *moral law* in all its articles, as all established by the same authority. It meant the reverse of all that love, which is the fulfilling of the law; the man thus acting in enmity against God, against himself, and against his whole posterity.

And this was the most atrocious, the most aggravated sin which ever has been, or could have been committed in this world: Considering the dreadful extent of it, as the sin of human nature, of all mankind in the first man; and its being the fountain of all other sin; and as committed by innocent man,—in whom Satan had no part, when coming to him as a tempter; and as committed upon a temptation of the very slightest nature, for renouncing his absolute subjection unto and dependence upon God.

§ III. The eating of the forbidden fruit was the effect of a *temptation*. The *devil* or Satan, the prince of devils, was the *tempter* †. But he was so, as permitted to take possession of and inspire a material *serpent*; whom he employed in speaking. Satan chose this instrument, as *more subtle than any beast of the field*: not as if the natural subtilty of the serpent could have properly aided him; but he liked an instrument congenial to himself, of cunning answerable to his own,—so far as material and spiritual qualities can bear a resemblance. He knew that the
woman

* Chap. I. Sect. III. § IV. † Rev. xii. 9.; John viii. 44.

woman could not be affrighted, while he supposed that she might be deceived. She thus became subjected to the *wiles of the devil*; while he knew that his *fiery darts* could not take effect.—And it is very remarkable, that Satan preserved a special regard to the instrument of his first and successful temptation; as he got some Gentile nations, afterwards, to worship him under the form of a serpent.

§ VI. The eating of the forbidden fruit was a *soul-sin*, as well as a *body-sin*. The eating was a bodily action; and no sin can lie simply in any act of the body,—or otherwise than as partaking with, and serving the soul in that sin. Accordingly, the temptation took its primary effect upon the soul. Satan's first attempt was to shake the woman's faith as to the truth of the *precept*; or of God's having forbidden her to eat of the fruit which the serpent referred to: While she had been sufficiently instructed in the knowledge of that positive law which God had given to the man before her formation; and of its equally restricting both him and her, from an eating of that fruit. But the devil having failed in his first attempt, he made his next attempt upon her faith of the *penalty*; and in this he succeeded. He thus got her brought by the way of inconsiderateness, into a state of unbelief. So it was, that the *serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty* *: Beguiling her through her unbelief, into a contempt of God's faithfulness and power with regard to the execution of the penalty, upon the precept being broken; yea into a monstrous pride,—as to rising up, after this manner, into a state of independency on God. And it is still common with men, though admitting the truth of precepts, to shake of all dread from threatenings; promising upon new advantages in their sinful course.

—Thus

* 2 Cor. xi. 3.

—Thus it was, that sin getting possession of the soul, took effect in the eating of the forbidden fruit.

§ V: The eating of the forbidden fruit was *one sin*. It was a complicated sin; as the outward action was the consequence of an inward apostasy from, and opposition to God. Yet all this is expressly set forth as *one sin* *: All one sin; conceived in the soul, so as to be brought forth and finished by and in the body. According to the terms of the positive law, it could not be broken but in the *eating*; while this eating could not fail to become the result of the conception of sin in the soul, on the bringing forth of which all became one finished sin.

But as the sin was *one* in its nature; it was likewise *one*, according to God's constitution, as to the *Parties* sinning. There were now, indeed, *two* distinct intelligent parties, concurring distinctly in the sin; and the one at some distance of time from the other: For *Adam was not deceived* (in the same manner as the woman was); *but the woman being deceived, was in the transgression* †.

Yet these *two parties*, by a most singular and unparalleled constitution, were made but *one party* before God; or in the construction of the positive law. They were constituted into a state of Covenant-identity, *sameness* or *oneness*, as to this whole matter.—The woman was considered as in the man, when God created him ‡: And all that God said to the man, when laying him under the positive law, he said to the woman as then in him. And after her distinct formation, yea after he and she were in the transgression; God still spake of them both as *one*, calling them both *the man* ||. The case was therefore so constituted, that the positive law could not be broken by

* Rom. v. 12, 16,—19. † 1 Tim. ii. 14. ‡ Gen. i. 27.
 || Gen. iii. 22, 24.

by the man, but in the way of his compliance with the woman; and it could not be broken by the woman, but so as the man was to concur with her in breaking it. It was in this co-operation of both, that the sin came to be finished; as they were both *one Covenant-head*. And they could not be separated in sinning,—more than a man's soul and body can be now, in the committing of an actual sin. They were as much one, in the positive state of the Covenant of Works, as the human soul and body: Distinction of their personal existences, and of time and place in their actings,—being all as nothing to God, no bar at all in his way, with regard to his most singular constitution.—It is therefore a groundless notion, that Eve sinned in a private character for herself. And all questions, about a supposed case and consequence of *Adam's* not eating the forbidden fruit, when *Eve* had done so, are quite vain; yea, most absurdly inconsistent with the whole state of God's dispensation concerning them,—supposing an impossibility.

§ VI. The eating of the forbidden fruit was a consequence of the man's having been left to the *freedom of his own will*. He enjoyed a perfect freedom of will, a freedom for acting *according to pleasure*; which is all the freedom that can belong to the will of a rational being: And there was no corrupt bias in his soul, for giving any wrong turn to his pleasure. Thus, according to the *habit* of his upright nature, he fully *could stand*: But that he actually *should stand*, did necessarily depend upon a continual influence of divine power upon this good habit, for carrying it out in every exercise thereof; as hath been explained in another place*. And such influence, God was pleased to *suspend*; leaving the

* Chap. III. § IV. V. VI.

the man to a trial of his own pleasure, in that exercise.

As to this matter, the independent LORD proceeded in the depth of his *absolute sovereignty*. He was not a debtor to his creature, for an actual upholding of him: He saw meet to set up an awful monument, in this case, of the infinite difference betwixt him and the most perfect creature; betwixt his own essential *infallibility*, and that *fallibility* which necessarily belongs to finite nature: And he was pleased, in the depth of his manifold wisdom, to order the dismal event of man's fall unto the praise of the glory of his grace, bringing the greatest good out of the greatest evil,—according to a New Covenant. *How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out *!*

§ VII. By the breach of the Covenant of Works, in eating the forbidden fruit,—man did fall into a state of *actual subjection* to the penalty or *curse* of the broken Covenant. This curse was of no force against him before his fall; it only served to let him see the dreadful peril upon which he would eat of that fruit. But now it came to be in actual force: The threatened death did take a *present* effect upon him, toward a *further* effect in due time; as formerly explained †. And in this terrible subjection to the curse, all his natural posterity are comprehended, as all sinning in him; according to the Covenant which they were under in him, as their representing head.

§ VIII. By the breach of the Covenant of Works, in eating the forbidden fruit,—man did fall into a *sinful condition*. The eating was an outward action, but it proceeded from a corruption which his nature

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was

* Rom. xi. 33.

† Chap. I. Sect. IV.

was first infected with,—unbelief, contempt and pride, with regard to his Sovereign LORD. Thus, an wound was given to his soul by the temptation; and a deadly wound, productive of spiritual death in all his faculties.

— He immediately lost the image of God, in which he was created. The divine light, which had filled his understanding, was now justly withdrawn; and left it in a state of horrible darkness. From the guilt brought upon his conscience, he justly apprehended God to have become his enemy; upon which his whole soul was sunk into a state of alienation from, and enmity against God. As he had turned from God, in gratifying a sensual appetite; his will and affections, his whole soul, fell down from God the original centre thereof: Falling into a new and wicked gravitation towards the creature; in a state of aversion from, and opposition to his glorious Creator. The most familiar communication which had subsisted betwixt God and him was broken up; and the bias of his soul was towards a progressive departure from God, his chief good.

§ IX. Immediately upon the breach of the Covenant of Works, a dispensation of the *Covenant of Grace* was introduced.—Our first parents, newly fallen into a state of sin and misery, *heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden*. According to the construction of the original language, it was not the LORD *God walking*; but the *voice*, the Word, the personal Word, *walking*. The LORD CHRIST then visited them; it would seem in an appearance of manhood, which he was afterwards to assume in reality. And he gave them a most precious promise of himself, as the blessed and blessing *Seed of the woman*; who was, in due time, to bruise the serpent's head, through his own suffering in human

man nature.—Such was the astonishing display which he then made, of his *delights* having been *with the sons* of men; even in their most undelightful condition, as foreseen in a state of sin and misery. Such was the dawning of the light of grace, which gradually increased during the Old-testament state; till it has come to a meridian glory, in the gospel-dispensation.

§ X. The man (including the woman) was then *driven out of the garden*. A reason was given for this; *lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever*. This cannot mean, that his eating of the tree of life could have been of any effect for his recovery; for restoring him from the spiritual death which he had sunk into, and from his subjection to the curse of the broken Covenant. The words are to be more properly rendered, *that he may live for ever*; not signifying what would have really been the consequence, but in what vain expectation he might have taken that course: Just as sinners, under awakenings of conscience, are still disposed to seek life in the way of the Old Covenant. And it was mercifully that the LORD excluded him from betaking himself to that imaginary remedy; so as he might betake himself to the only true and effectual remedy in the first promise, resting his whole confidence and hope upon that ground.

CHAPTER VI.

Of our natural Subjection to the Covenant of Works.

§ I. **T**HE Covenant of Works, in its *positive state*, was *peculiar to our first parents*. It was a special act of God's providence towards man, when he was created; not a matter of natural knowledge to him, but wholly of revelation. And this positive state of the Covenant came to be for ever at an end, so soon as it was broken: The man continued no longer under a test of obedience to the mere will of God, in abstaining from the forbidden fruit; he was sent out of the garden, upon his once eating of it, so as never to have more ado with it. But he still continued in subjection to the Covenant of Works, according to its *natural state*. This was still in being, and in full force upon him, as to both precept and penalty; and to remain so, till he should be delivered from it by a saving interest in the New Covenant. Moreover, in breaking the positive law, he fell from his *public* character as a Covenant head of his natural posterity: And he (with the woman) fell back into that *private* character which was original to him, under the moral law as a *Covenant-law*; according to the impression of it which was made upon him in his creation: While the penalty of death upon breaking the positive law, was the same that belongs to every breach of the moral law, which the other comprehended.

Accordingly, none of his natural posterity are, or have ever been in a personal subjection to the Covenant of Works, according to its positive state. As he was soon removed from any further concern with the tree of knowledge of good and evil, none
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of them ever saw it; and it has long ceased to have any distinct existence: So that the Covenant, in this state, is not, as it never was of any immediate obligation upon them. There is no natural apprehension of any such thing: And there is no knowledge in the world, that such a state of the Covenant ever was, but from the revelation of it in the Scriptures; while it is revealed there as once a matter of fact, not as of standing obligation.

But though the Covenant, in that peculiar state of it, peculiar to our first parents, came to be quite abolished by the one sin of breaking it; yet the *guilt* of this sin, which they incurred, was not *peculiar to them*. For, as it was committed by them in a public capacity, in the place and name of mankind; the guilt of it is common to every individual of these, as brought forth into a natural being. And this guilt comes to have a distinguished place, in a thorough conviction of sin; as may be considered in the next chapter.

§ II. The Covenant of Works in its *natural state*, is *common to all mankind*. It is a matter of natural knowledge to all: It is still interwoven with human nature, as in the case of the first man; though not in any such perfection and distinctness of the impression, as belonged to his upright nature. But some apprehension of the moral law as a *Covenant-law*, is natural to all mankind in their earthly state. For this state could not admit of eternity in the nature of it, like that which the angels were created in. A state of happiness in the immediate enjoyment of God, beyond and above all animal exercises and enjoyments on earth, is what human nature was formed with a desire of. But this higher state was naturally desired and expected, only as the issue of obedience to God's will on earth. Such was the original,

original, engrained dictate of reason and conscience; about arriving at a glorious state of eternal life in heaven, as the consequence of living unto God on earth: And this is just the form of the Covenant of Works, as essential to that nature with which God has been pleased to endow mankind.

Accordingly, the natural apprehensions which all men have of any happiness in the other world, do still run out in the prospect of obtaining it by their own obedience,—by the deeds of the law; as this law, in the natural apprehensions of it, doth still bear that notification, *The man which doth those things shall live by them*: It still carries this dictate in it, as natural to it; *if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments*.

The moral law is therefore naturally in force upon all, as a Covenant-law. In all the declarations which the Scripture make of it to men, as in their natural estate, it is still proposed to them in its *Covenant-form*: Just in the same manner, abstracting from peculiar circumstances, as it was to Israel from mount *Sinai*. It is thus a law requiring obedience to it, for the obtaining of eternal life upon that ground: But the obedience which it requires for this end, is nothing less than absolute perfection thereof.

1st, The obedience must be perfect, as to the *matter* of it. It must comprehend a performance of all duties belonging to every one's place, in thoughts and words and actions; according to all the extent of the moral law, in both the substance and circumstances of these duties. It must exclude all sins of commission and omission, of wickedness and weakness. For this awful certification belongs to the Covenant of Works; *curst is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law*,

law, to do them *. Every failure is a breach of that Covenant; and an universal breach of it, forfeiting all pretensions to life by it: *For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all †.*

2dly, The obedience must be perfect as to the principle of it. It must be from a principle of love to God, and our neighbour: For the law saith; *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength; and thy neighbour as thy self ‡.* It must be with *delight in the law of the LORD ||.* It must be with an ultimate regard to the glory of God, as our chief end: For the law saith; *Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God §.*

And therefore it must not be a *mercenary* obedience, or simply for the sake of obtaining life by the works of the law. Man's obedience, even in his primitive estate, when capable of performing all these works, was not to be of that nature. The obligation of the law, in the Covenant of Works, did nowise depend upon the promise of life in that Covenant; as if, abstracting from this, obedience had not been due. Conformity to the law could have nothing of *natural merit* in it; but the prospect of eternal life, on that ground, did wholly arise from God's engagement by a free promise: And so, the life was to be a matter of thankful expectation through obedience, not of a *mercenary claim* on that account. The Covenant-law can admit of no regard to our own good, but in a subordination to the glory of God.

3dly, The obedience must be perfect as to the *duration* of it. It cannot admit of any intermissions; but

* Gal. iii. 10.

† James ii. 10.

‡ Mark xii. 30, 31.

|| Psal. i. 2.

§ 1 Cor. x. 31.

but must run on, without interruption, through the whole course of creature-being. For even supposing a perseverance in it, forward unto a state of confirmation; when the obedience would be finished, as to its conditional nature in the Covenant of Works: Yet a perpetuity of it must still remain, for eternal homage to God in an immediate enjoyment of him.

Such is our natural subjection to the Covenant of Works: And such is the claim which it makes of obedience, upon the pain of eternal death in hell. Nothing of its original force is abated: Nor could it now fail, more than at first, to give eternal life; upon a full satisfaction of all its demands. A promise of this life was a natural and *just* dictate of that Covenant, in the conscience of *upright* man; proceeding on a perfection of obedience: But the natural remains of such a dictate, in the conscience of *sinful* men, is quite *erroneous*,—because it abstracts from that necessary perfection; while, on the contrary, their conscience should now dictate their actual subjection to the just penalty of death, for every act of disobedience.

§ III. All mankind are not left to continue in this natural subjection to the Covenant of Works. A certain number who are *redeemed from the earth, redeemed from among men, the nations of them which are saved*,—are delivered from that woful subjection; and their deliverance from it is through a glorious mystery of the grace and power of God. As,

1st, The righteousness of that Covenant has been fulfilled, and full satisfaction has been made for the breach of it,—and a purchase has been thus made of eternal life for them; by the LORD JESUS CHRIST, as having come into a state of subjection to it for them, in their place and name: So that, upon their

coming

coming to be in him by faith, they have no more concern with the law in its Covenant-form.

2dly, As they come to be in him by faith, they are endowed with a *new nature*; having the *law put into their mind, and written in their heart*,—not as a *Covenant-law*, but only as a *rule of life*. The Covenant law, which was interwoven with, and essential to manhood in its natural state, has no place at all in this *new* or renewed nature; that original impression of it on their heart is so far graciously effaced: And they deal with the Covenant-law set forth in the Scriptures, as a law which Christ has fulfilled for them; leaving them to have nothing to do with it in that form, but only as a rule for living unto him in a course of sanctification.

CHAPTER VII.

Of our natural Estate under the Covenant of Works.

AS man was first subjected to that Covenant, he was fully qualified for obtaining life by it; in an estate of innocence, of holiness and happiness. But the case did soon become the very reverse. For,

§ I. All mankind are naturally in a state of subjection to the guilt of the *first sin*; the sin of eating the forbidden fruit, by which the Covenant of Works was broken. They all committed that sin, as represented by and acting in the first man*: And they are severally, as brought forth into the world, lying under the *guilt* of it; or a liableness to the whole penalty

* Chap. II. Sect. I. § II.

nalty of death, to the wrath and curse of God on that account. The sin imputed to them, lays them under the penalty to be inflicted; the penalty of that first sin, as comprehending in it a breach of the whole moral law.

Yet the sin of eating the forbidden fruit, with the guilt thereby incurred, is nowise a matter of *natural apprehension*; as there is no knowledge of it, or of the Covenant of Works with the first man as a public person, otherwise than by *revelation*. The moral law serves to give *the knowledge of sin* *; when it comes to be used by the Holy Spirit upon the conscience of a sinner, in the work of conviction. But the *moral law* can discover nothing about the sin of breaking the *positive law*. And so, in the greatest measure of conviction by the moral law, even all the conviction which can precede conversion, there can be no conviction of that sin; whatever general notion there may be of the Scripture-doctrine concerning it. All other sin, as discovered by the law in an awakened conscience, is a matter of *knowledge*; for *the law is not of faith* †: But this sin is a matter of *faith*, upon the divine testimony concerning it in the Scripture. A person is therefore brought to see and take with this sin, only when his conviction issues in conversion; or when his mind is savingly enlightened in the knowledge of Christ. For Christ is then seen in his relation to the *first man*,—as being the *second man*, the LORD from heaven; as a head of righteousness to the person, in the New Covenant: And this implies a humbling sight of his natural estate under the *first man*, as to him a head of unrighteousness in the Covenant of Works. And though none can have any apprehensions of this matter, who have not the Scripture to inform them of it; yet all who have died, and shall die in their sins, must intuitively and dreadfully apprehend it in the other world.

§ II.

* Rom. iii. 20.

† Gal. iii. 12.

§ II. All mankind are naturally in a state of *original sin*.—The soul is created by God in the womb, under a *want of original righteousness*; and that, as the just demerit of the first sin. God puts no evil into the soul, when creating it; but the want of natural *righteousness*, must infer a natural *unrighteousness*. For there can be no proper midst, in a soul, betwixt moral good and evil; more than betwixt light and darkness, betwixt heat and cold. And it is even absurd to suppose, that a *corrupt* man could have an *uncorrupt* progeny: As it is to suppose, that one could bring a *clean thing out of an unclean*; or that a *fountain can send forth, at the same place, sweet water and bitter*; or that a *corrupt tree can bring forth good fruit* *.

The posterity of the first man are therefore in the same sinful condition, as to the state of their nature, which he fell into †. They are *shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin*; they are *estranged from the womb, and go astray as soon as they be born* ‡: Having lost that image of God which originally belonged to human nature. Their *understanding is darkened*, and filled with error; in opposition to the light of divine truth, and any proper knowledge of God ||. Their *wills* are in a state of contrariety to his will: *The carnal mind, the minding of the flesh, of corrupt nature, is enmity against God*; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be in its natural estate §. They are thus *enemies to God by their mind in wicked works*; being *haters of God* **. They *mind earthly things* ††, in the whole course of their *affections*. And *their conscience is defiled by guilt*: So that if it be not asleep,

* Job xiv. 4.; James iii. 11; Matth. vii. 18.

† Chap. V. § VII. ‡ Psal. li. 5.; Iviii. 3. || Eph. iv. 18. § Rom. viii. 7. ** Col. i. 21.; Rom. i. 30. †† Phil. iii. 19.

asleep, or as *seared with a hot iron*; they can only have a *certain fearful looking for of judgment* *.

The Covenant of Works was not properly broken, till in the first man's eating the forbidden fruit. His posterity derive inbred corruption from him, *considered as fallen* by this breach of the Covenant. Their being involved in the guilt of that sin, as their guilt in him,—must therefore be considered as previous, in the order of nature, to their deriving of such corruption from him; this being the foundation upon which they do so, as the just reason of their souls being created under a want of original righteousness.—Some metaphysical reasonings which have been used to the contrary, however specious, cannot accord to the nature of the case †.

§ III. All mankind are naturally in a state of *actual wickedness*. The corruption of their natures takes effect in an universality of sinfulness; through the whole course of their thoughts, and words, and actions. In this respect *the whole world lieth in wickedness* †. The most horrid floods thereof have been overspreading it in every age; bidding defiance to the very being, as well as to the whole authority and

* 1 Tim. iv. 2.; Tit. i. 15.; Heb. x. 27.

† The first man's *public* character did not abolish or supersede his *private* character; but was only superadded to it for a time: And he must have acted in both these characters, when committing his first complex sin. His inward compliance with Satan's temptation, and the effect of it in his soul,—belonged to him only as a *private person*, not involving his posterity; because it did not become a *public deed*, of breaking the Covenant in their name, as well as for himself—till it became a *finished deed*, in his actual eating of the forbidden fruit. Their participation with him in that *public guilt*, his only public guilt,—must therefore be prior, in order of nature, to all their personal derivations from him of moral and penal evil; as the ground upon which these derivations proceed.

‡ 1 John v. 19.

and will of the one true God. Every article of his law is trampled upon; often in the grossest forms of irreligion and immorality. And even when persons, in their natural estate, are doing what is *materially* good; yet this is made wholly evil, by their ungodly or selfish *manner* of doing it. And no speculative light in the understanding, nor any remonstrances of a galling conscience,—can in any measure subdue the corruption of the heart, for abolishing or impairing the state of actual wickedness; however much the forms of it may be thereby altered. *They are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable, filthy: There is none that doth good, no not one:—There is no fear of God before their eyes* *.

§ IV. All mankind are naturally in an estate of *misery*. They are under God's wrath and curse, unto most dreadful effects thereof; both in this life, and in that which is to come.

1st, They are naturally undergoing the effects of that curse, in all the course and circumstances of their present life. What felt punishments, what sufferings of every sort,—have been all along passing upon the human kind, in the righteous judgment of God! What public calamities have swept away multitudes, through all the bypast periods of time; introductory to an approaching destruction of this whole visible world, on account of human wickedness! And as to the outward *blessings* which are enjoyed by corrupt and wicked men even these are *cursed* unto them: *Their table is made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a (judicial) recompence unto them* †. It universally holds, that *destruction and misery are in their ways* †.

2dly,

* Rom. iii. 12, 18.; Psal. xiv. 3.

† Mal. i. 2.; Rom. xi. 9. ‡ Rom. iii. 16.

2dly, God has been all along exercising a wonderful forbearance and long-suffering toward the sinful race of mankind, while going on in their wickedness; but this is wholly limited to the course of their time, and must issue in the horrors of a death-bed. No felt effects of his wrath and curse, in this life, do ever nearly amount to the full wages of sin: But at death, and in the world to come, even through an eternal state, for ever and ever,—these wages will be paid, and ever a-paying, so far as finite nature can admit of that effect. The Scripture represents the condition of wicked men in the other world, as a state of *everlasting punishment*, of absolute and unabating *torment*; of *wailing and gnashing of teeth* *. —Such is the death sinners are finally subjected to, under the Covenant of Works †.

§ V. The most part of those within the visible Church are living in a state of *brutal stupidity*, as to their natural estate under the Covenant of Works. It holds of them, that *they know not, neither will they understand; they walk on in darkness* †. They understand not, nor take any thought about the sinfulness and misery of their natural estate. They live, all along, wholly unconcerned about death and the judgment beyond it; as if they were like the beasts that perish, or were to be done when they die. They indulge themselves in carnal enjoyments and amusements; each upon the matter saying to his soul,—*take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry*: Quite regardless of all God's warnings, in his word and providence, about the woful end of these things. And if at any time awakened to some consideration of their ways, they satisfy themselves with some general presumption

* Matth. xxv. 46.; Luke xvi. 23, 24.; Matth. xiii. 42, 50.

† Chap. I. Sect. IV.

‡ Psal. lxxxii. 5.; Eccl. iii. 18.; ix. 3.

sumption of God's mercy: Or they rest in a vain notion that they may have an opportunity and more leisure afterwards, for laying everlasting concerns to heart.

§ VI. Many of those within the visible Church are living in a *woful delusion*, as to their natural estate under the Covenant of Works; who yet appear to have a rational, and even serious concern about their everlasting salvation. Some of these understand not, or consider not, or relish not the scriptural way of salvation; and live as if nothing more were necessary for obtaining it, than an external regularity in the performance of religious and relative duties.

But others of them, even after great advances in religious knowledge and exercises, are still seeking salvation and eternal life in the way of the Old Covenant. They understand not the natural marriage and attachment of their hearts unto the way of *doing for life*, according to that Covenant; or they see no evil in it. They continue under the reigning power of that sinful attachment; not merely under such remains of it as are to be found in the best. They indeed make some account of the New-Covenant righteousness, as the ground of their acceptance with God and title to eternal life; but this is only by way of supplement for their own deficiencies, in *going about to establish their own righteousness* *. They have never seen the natural opposition of their hearts, unto an absolute and immediate dependence on the righteousness of Christ; at least they have seen no evil in that opposition, or in a compounding of his righteousness with their own for justification. They have never become *dead to the law*, and *married to CHRIST*; but are living in a woful delusion, as if they were building their confidence and hope on a good

* Rom. x. 3.

good foundation, though never getting beyond refinements upon an Old-Covenant religion *. And it is most lamentable, that many are entertained with pernicious doctrines,—directing them unto, and encouraging them in that delusive course.

§ VII. The estate of mankind under the Covenant of Works, is naturally quite *desperate*.—They have no *ability* for recovering themselves, from the depth of sin and misery into which they are fallen: No ability for answering the demands which that Covenant makes, of nothing less than perfect obedience for life,—more than *the Ethiopian can change his skin, or the leopard his spots* †; nor can they do any thing for repairing the breach of that Covenant, by a proper satisfaction. And they have no *willingness* to recover themselves, or to be recovered, from the corruption of their natures and the sinfulness of their lives: They *love to have it so*; they *love darkness, rather than light*; they are *obstinate*, their *neck is an iron sinew*, and their *brow brass*; they *refuse to be ashamed* ‡. Nor could any finite wisdom have ever devised how their recovery might be brought about, consistently with the essential perfections and prerogatives of the divine nature. Nothing within the compass of their own doing or contrivance, could have prevented a perishing of the whole human race for ever in hell: Their condition being naturally as *desperate* as that of DEVILS.

But the ONLY WISE GOD, the KING ETERNAL, HATH REMEMBERED US IN OUR LOW ESTATE; FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER ||!

* Rom. vii. 4, 6. † Jer. xiii. 23.

John iii. 19.; Isa. xlviii. 4.; Jer. iii. 3.

‡ Jer. v. 31.;
|| Psal. cxxxvi. 23.



SACRED CONTEMPLATIONS:

PART SECOND.

A

V I E W

OF THE

COVENANT OF GRACE:

IN THE

ESTABLISHMENT OF IT FROM ETERNITY;

AND THE

ACCOMPLISHMENT OF IT IN TIME;

AND THE

EFFECT OF IT THROUGH ETERNITY.

I have made a Covenant with my Chosen, PsAL. lxxxix. 3.

Quam dives es in Misericordia, quam magnificus in Justitia, quam munificus in Gratia, Domine Deus noster!

BERNARDUS.

[IN ENGLISH.]

How rich in Mercy, how magnificent in Justice, how munificent in Grace art thou, O Lord our God!





A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

AFTER having made some progress in the VIEW of the *Covenant of Works*, the Author conceived a design of proceeding afterwards, as he hath now done, to a VIEW of the *Covenant of Grace*.

The writings of some eminent men on that subject, have been of singular use for preserving and propagating the truth of the gospel. But they could not exhaust that great subject: And the Author has been led to consider it in a very different manner. At the same time, —he hath freely obviated several things advanced in some of these writings, which he considered as misapprehensions of the subject.

The doctrine of this Covenant is the sum of the gospel; in which only, all our help and hope for eternity is to be found: And people are wofully imposed upon, to their everlasting perdition,—when any thing contrary unto, or even different from this, is put upon them under the character of the Gospel. The course which God prescribes
to

to every sinner for salvation, is this,—*Let him take hold of my Covenant*: And, in order to this, it is necessary that they understand the matter and method of that Covenant, in the administration of it to them by the gospel.

This Covenant is full of *Righteousness*, for the *justification* of guilty sinners; and of *Grace*, for their *sanctification* to eternal glory: So that, without taking hold of it by faith,—men must die under all the guilt, and in all the defilement of their sin; unto a state of eternal death in hell.

V I E W

O F T H E

COVENANT OF GRACE, &c.

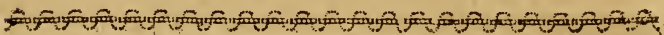
THE truth of the *Covenant of Works*, in its permanent state, is naturally known: All may find some evidence of it, in an impression thereof upon their own hearts. The full representation of that Covenant, indeed, is only to be found in the Scriptures: Yet this is properly a restoration of it from the deficiencies of that natural impression, which have taken place since the breach of it; and from those errors which corrupt minds have fallen into concerning it.—But the truth of the *Covenant of Grace* is known only by revelation: It is set forth to us in the holy Scriptures, as wholly a matter of faith upon the divine testimony; which is the highest sort of evidence that can be proposed to the human mind.

We are *saved through faith* *, as embracing and improving that *revealed Covenant*; of which natural reason has no apprehension, and could make no discovery. The eternal salvation of a sinner, as to both the fact and possibility of it, lies entirely without

* Eph. ii. 8.

out the compass of reason; which serves only for the purposes of the present life, nowise of the life to come. The matter of that salvation, and the manner of its attainment, belong wholly to the object and exercise of a divine faith; according to that Covenant. The mockers of this last time, filled with a pride of their own reason, do indeed laugh at faith in the matters of eternal happiness; but they do so, at the peril of their everlasting damnation.

It is now proposed to take some view of the *Covenant of Grace*, in the three great PERIODS of it; or in its *Establishment* from eternity, and its *Accomplishment* in time, and its *Effect* through eternity.



PERIOD I.

Of the Establishment of the Covenant of Grace from Eternity.

SECT. I.

Of the Reality of the Covenant of Grace.

THIS Covenant is nowise a matter of imagination, but of absolute *reality* or truth. Many evidences of this might be collected from the Scriptures; but it may suffice, after what has been formerly said *, to insist on such of them as are of a more direct and decisive nature.

§ I. The reality of the Covenant of Grace appears, from the mention which is expressly made of it in Scripture.

* Part I. Chap. II. Sect. I. § I. 5^{thly}.

Scripture. The only instance of this, among many, which shall be presently insisted on, lies in the 89th psalm: *I have made a Covenant with my Chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant; thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations* *.

The speaker, in this passage, can be no other but the LORD; who is mentioned in the beginning of the psalm. That the designations [*my chosen, David my servant*] were immediately meant of the literal David, will not be questioned. But it would be an using of the reader with some indignity, to be at pains for proving to him,—that the gracious declarations and promises in the psalm referred to, could bear but a very *subordinate* application to that person; as this will be obvious, at one reading of the psalm. JESUS CHRIST, and his spiritual kingdom in the Church, were most signally typified by the *literal David* and his kingdom in Israel. Accordingly, long afterwards, the LORD did again and again speak of JESUS CHRIST, and promised him as to come, under the same designation,—*David my servant* †. And a solemn declaration was made concerning him when he came, to the same purpose: *The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob* (not literal but spiritual) *for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end* ‡. Moreover, long after the *literal David* had disappeared, the LORD promised this *spiritual David* to make his appearance, under a parallel designation; *my servant whom I have chosen, mine Elect in whom my soul delighteth* ||.

It is therefore beyond all reasonable question,—that the passage now under consideration must be understood, as having its ultimate and *principal* verification

* Psal. lxxxix. 3, 4. † Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24.; xxxvii. 24. 25.

‡ Luke i. 32, 33. || Isa. xlii. 1.; xliii. 10.

rification in JESUS CHRIST; asserting a covenant made with him on behalf of his spiritual seed, and of his royal government among them. And this covenant was then spoken of as *already* made; even made from all eternity, according to the eternity and immutability of the divine parties: So that it can be no other but a *Covenant of Grace* with Christ, on behalf of sinful men.

§ II. The reality of the Covenant of Grace appears, from the state of matters about some of fallen mankind before the world began. A striking discovery of this, lies in the 8th chapter of the *Proverbs* *. Sufficient evidence will be given in another section,—that it is JESUS CHRIST, the eternal Son of God, who is there speaking of himself under the character of *Wisdom*; the *personal* Wisdom of God. He says,—that he was *set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was*. As thus set up by the eternal Father from everlasting, he says—*I was rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men*; as then all present to him, in the decree about their future existence and condition. And this must certainly coincide with his having been *foreordained for them before the foundation of the world* †. He was then set up and foreordained, so that *grace was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began* ‡. Accordingly, *God promised eternal life to them before the world began* †: And this promise could not be given to themselves immediately, when they had no existence; it could only be given to them *in Christ*, as grace was given to them in him.—And all this can mean nothing other than what it is brought to prove; a
gracious

* Prov. viii. 23. 31.

† 1 Pet. i. 20.

‡ 2 Tim. i. 9.

|| Tit. i. 2.

gracious establishment then made, a *Covenant of Grace* with Christ on their behalf.

§ III. The reality of the Covenant of Grace appears, from the fact of the final and everlasting salvation of some of fallen mankind. The Scriptures are so full of this blessed fact, that it is quite needless to deal in any proof of it. And their final salvation through eternity, must be the effect of a decree concerning it from eternity; as nothing could come to pass, but from its having been foreordained by God's eternal purpose. And unto this salvation they are expressly said to have been *chosen before the foundation of the world*; being *predestinated* thereto, *according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will* *.

But this could not be by a *simple decree*. According to what has been observed in another place †,—the essential perfections and prerogatives of the divine nature could not have admitted of their salvation, but through a full effect of the law-curse to which they are naturally subjected: And such an effect of it upon themselves, must have absolutely prevented their salvation for ever. It could only be, as the Scripture declares it to have been; through their being *redeemed from the curse of the law*, by Christ's being *made a curse for them* ‡. The decree of their salvation must therefore have been such, as contained a gracious establishment for having it effectuated in that manner; a *Covenant of Grace* with Christ in their behalf.

§ IV. The reality of the Covenant of Grace appears, from the method of grace in the actual salvation of some of fallen mankind. They are *saved by*
Q
grace :

* Eph. i. 4, 11.

† Part I. Ch. I. Sect. IV. § III.

‡ Gal. iii. 13.

grace *: By the mere grace, or free favour of God toward them, *without the deeds of the law*; in opposition to all pretended merit by any *works of righteousness which they have done*, all to the praise of the glory of his grace †. But this grace could not take effect upon them, inconsistently with the glory of divine holiness and justice and truth. It was necessary that *mercy and truth should meet together*, that *righteousness and peace should kiss each other* ‡; that the divine holiness and justice, as well as grace, should be glorified in the manner of their salvation: That it should be through a repairing of the breach of the Covenant of Works; and through a maintaining of the glory of the divine justice and truth, by a satisfaction for that breach.

Accordingly, we are expressly taught,—that *grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord*; in his repairing the breach of the Covenant of Works, by fulfilling all the righteousness of it for them: And it is through his being *made sin for them*, under the imputed guilt and inflicted punishment of it; that they *might be made the righteousness of God in him* ||.—Such is the method of grace in their actual salvation, to the glory of all the divine perfections; a method which must have been settled in the counsel of God from eternity, according to which only he proceeds in time: And which must certainly import a gracious establishment for this purpose; a *Covenant of Grace* with Christ about their salvation.

§ V. The reality of the Covenant of Grace appears, from the *personal state* of JESUS CHRIST. It shall only be observed here, that he bears the state of a *public person*. In comparison with the *first man*,
he

* Eph. ii. 5, 8.

† Rom. iii. 27, 28.; Tit. iii. 5.;

Eph. i. 6. ‡ Psal. lxxxv. 10. || Rom. v. 21.; 2 Cor. v. 21.

he is called the *second man* *. Of him the first man was a figure †, a representing type. In him all the redeemed from among men are *made alive*; as they have all *died* in the first man ‡. By his *obedience* they are all *made righteous*; as, by the first man's *disobedience* they were *made sinners* ||.—And it is impossible to put any rational sense upon all this, but as denoting a *Covenant-headship* in the person of Christ; which can only be in his having a *Covenant of Grace* made with him from all eternity, for the salvation of all who are saved from among men.

In a word,—the whole matter and manner of the salvation of sinners, according to the gospel, proclaims the reality of that Covenant. For this salvation could not be by mere acts of divine *will* and *power*, consistently with God's not denying himself: It could not be but through an interposition of the *manifold wisdom* of God §; providing for this salvation by *price* as well as power, to the glory of all his name,—in an establishment of a *Covenant of Grace* with Jesus Christ for that purpose. Every thing which belongs to our recovery from the sinfulness and misery of our natural estate, must be traced up to that Covenant: And upon the faith of it depends all our salvation, with all proper exercise concerning the same.

S E C T. II.

General Observations about the Covenant of Grace.

§ I. The Covenant of Grace has no *parallel*, or any other transaction that may be properly brought into a comparison with it; but the *Covenant of Works*

* 1 Cor. xv. 47. † Rom. v. 14. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 22.

|| Rom. v. 19. See Part I. Chap. II. Sect. I. § Eph. iii. 10.

Works which was made with the first man. This parallel is very proper; as it is expressly stated in several passages of Scripture that have been considered. The *first man* was a Covenant-head or representative of all his *natural seed*: Who were to stand or fall, in and with him: as he should fulfil or break the condition of that Covenant which was made with him for them, and with them in him. Accordingly, JESUS CHRIST is a Covenant-head or representative of all his *spiritual seed*: Who have a standing in a state of acceptance with God, and a title to eternal life; wholly upon his fulfilled condition of that Covenant which is made with him for them, and with them in him.

But no covenants which God ever made with any other [as with *Noah, Abraham, Moses, Phineas, and David*], ought to be mentioned in any comparison with the Covenant of Grace; as to a representative capacity of the parties covenanted with. For none of these were *representatives*, in any such sense as Christ was. They were *natural roots* of different parties, to whom promises were made through them: but they were nowise Covenant-heads or *representatives* of those parties, as at once to stand or fall in and with them; more than parents still are, when having the promise unto them and their children.

§ II. The Covenant of Grace, in comparison with the Covenant of Works, is called the *second* or *New* Covenant: But this is not with any respect to the period or order in which it was made. In all such respects, it was the first and an old Covenant; this having been made from eternity, and the other only in time. But there was no place for its being revealed and taking any effect, till the Covenant of Works was broken; so that, with regard to the manifestation

nifestation and administration thereof, it is the *second* and the *New Covenant*.

According to our finite way of conceiving, we have to think of this Covenant as made of old; in a period long ago past, infinitely before all worlds. But, with regard to the divine Parties concerned in making of it, this is ever *present* and new; as, unto them, nothing can be past or future. The fulfilling of its condition was to man a matter of futurity at the revelation of it, for about four thousand years: But it was ever present to God; so that he proceeded upon it in saving sinners, under the Old-Testament state, as a fulfilled condition. And though this was a matter of futurity to the *manhood* of Jesus Christ, till he finished his work upon the cross; yet, with regard to him as *God-man*, it was ever present: For, as to himself in that blessed character, he said of himself,—*before Abraham was* (not, *I was*, but) *I AM* *; all that is past to us, with all that is future to us, being ever present to him. Such is the glorious and inconceivable manner of duration which belongs to the divine Being, in each person of the Godhead!

§ III. The *Covenant of Grace* is a *Covenant of Redemption*. The blessedness therein provided through Christ for sinners of mankind, is set forth in Scripture under the general character of *redemption*; *eternal redemption*, which he has *obtained* for them †. He is often called the *Redeemer*; and Job looked forward to him in that character, *my Redeemer* ‡. He is the Redeemer of men, as becoming a *kinsman* to them; the only kinsman of the human family, who has a right and capacity for redeeming them: Nor could he accomplish their redemption, but in this relation to them; that he might be capable of serving

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* John viii. 58.

† Heb. ix. 12.

‡ Job xix. 25.

ing and suffering for them in their nature.—And all the saved people of that family, are called *the redeemed of the LORD* *. His great employment concerning them in that Covenant was, *to redeem them that were under the law*; from their natural subjection to the law of the Covenant of Works, in all its commanding and cursing power as such: *To redeem them from the curse of the law*, in all its obligation and effects; *to redeem them from all iniquity*; *to redeem them unto God*, into a state of glorious conformity to him and communion with him in heaven for ever †. And all this redemption is, not only by an efficacy of his infinite power, but also by a price of infinite value; *the precious blood of Christ* ‡.

It is therefore a *Covenant of Redemption* to Christ, as to the *matter* of his employment therein. But at the same time, as to the *origin* of it, and *our enjoyment* of that redemption,—it is wholly a *Covenant of Grace* to us. Our redemption through it, is *according to the riches of his grace*: Before God, we are *justified freely by his grace*; but it is *through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ* ||.

§ IV. There is only *one* Covenant of God's making, the Covenant of Grace and Redemption, for the eternal salvation of mankind sinners. The Scripture reveals but one for that purpose; *the new Covenant, the everlasting Covenant*. As man's ruin is by one Covenant, his recovery is likewise by one. God has but one salvation; one way of saving sinners, by one CHRIST.

There is, therefore, no propriety in this definition which has been given of the Covenant of Grace: “It is a gracious convention betwixt God and sinful elect man; by which, for the intervening mediation

* Isa. lxii. 12.

† Gal. iv. 5.; iii. 13.; Tit. ii. 14.;

Rev. v. 9.

‡ 1 Pet. i. 19.

|| Eph. i. 7.; Rom. iii. 24.

“diation of Christ, all saving grace and glory is allotted to those who believe and repent :”—Or, in other words, “It is a gracious convention betwixt an offended God and offending man ; for bestowing grace and glory, in Christ, upon sinful man, under the condition of faith.” And it may be observed, that,

1st, Such a Covenant as this must have its beginning in time ; as it could not be entered into immediately with elect sinful men before they existed. And, therefore, it must be very different from that Covenant of Grace which was entered into immediately with Jesus Christ, from all eternity.

2^{dly}, According to the above-cited definition, Christ is set forth as the Mediator betwixt God and sinful man : But he cannot, according to the Scriptures, or without absurdity, be set forth as the Mediator of two distinct Covenants ; the one made with him for men from all eternity, and the other made with man through him in time.

3^{dly}, According to the above-cited definition, faith and repentance is the proper and formal condition of the Covenant of Grace ; so that it must be the immediate ground of title to the promised blessings, as really as man’s perfect obedience would have been under the Covenant of Works. His perfect obedience under that Covenant could have had no *intrinsic merit* in it ; but it would have had a *pactional merit* in it, by God’s favourable constitution : And the case would be the same, with regard to that alleged condition of the Covenant of Grace ; God graciously admitting of it, through Christ’s mediation, as the immediate ground of the person’s title to eternal life.

4^{thly}, The Scripture states an absolute opposition betwixt *grace* and *works*, with regard to the ground of a sinner’s claim for justification and eternal life ; such

an opposition betwixt these as can admit of no mixture at all *. But, according to the above-cited definition, there is at least a mixture of *works* brought in, under the name of *faith* and *repentance*: That, through Christ's mediation, these are accepted of as a condition for obtaining eternal life. And such a Covenant of Grace, would be but a new sort of a Covenant of Works, pretended to be on easier terms than the old; obtained for sinners by the Mediator.

5thly, According to the above-cited definition, the intervening of Christ, or of his mediation, is betwixt God on the one part,—and the believing penitent sinner on the other part; these being the two contracting parties in the Covenant, betwixt whom the mediatory intervention is made: For the sinner must be first stated as a believing and a repenting person, before God doth establish the Covenant with him. But he can no more make himself such a person, than he can perform the whole condition of the Covenant of Works. How, then, comes he to be a penitent believer, before God's entering into a Covenant of Grace with him? Doth Christ first make him such, bestowing on him all this good qualification; in order to God's gracious dealing with him after that manner!

6thly, According to the above-cited definition, all that is allowed to Christ's mediation, is an obtaining of a Covenant of Grace with a sinner: That, through his mediation, God condescends to promise all blessings to the sinner, on the condition of his own faith and repentance. This is really the same as to say,—that in Christ, and for his sake, God is pleased to accept of the person's own righteousness, as the immediate ground of his justification, and title to eternal life; the righteousness of Christ only meriting

* Rom. xi. 6.

meriting this, on behalf of the person's own righteousness.

7thly, The above-cited definition must suppose a distinction betwixt the Covenant of *Redemption* and the Covenant of *Grace*; the former made with Christ from eternity; but the latter with a believing and repenting sinner in time. And then, this should not be called *the Covenant*, but *the Covenants of Grace*: There must be as many distinct *Covenants*, and as many distinct *conditions* thereof, though all of the same general nature,—as there have been and are believers and penitents, even an innumerable multitude of them; one for each: And the number of these Covenants would be still increasing,—as sinners come to be converted, one by one, in the successive periods of the church-state.

§. V. As there was an immediate and *primary* making of the Covenant of Grace with CHRIST from eternity; it was then also established, that there should be a mediate and *secondary* making of it with church-members in time: Which was to be in the way of both *general* and *special* dispensation.

This is evident in many places of Scripture. It is so, particularly in what the LORD said to Abraham,—*I will establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting Covenant; to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee* *: In what he promised to Israel of old, and promiseth to the church body still,—*This is the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people* †: In what David said concerning him,—*He*
R *hath*

* Gen. xvii. 7.

† Jer. xxxi. 33.; Heb. viii. 8.

bath made with me an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire * : In what David affirmed of his dealing with his people,—*He will shew them his Covenant* † : And in what he still promiseth,—*Every one that taketh hold of my Covenant, even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer* ‡ : *I will bring you into the bond of the Covenant* ||.

The above passages denote a general dispensation, toward the members of the visible Church; in an *exhibition* which is made of the Covenant of Grace to them. It is exhibited, as wholly consisting of *exceeding great and precious promises*; the accomplishment of which is to proceed upon the mediatory righteousness of Jesus Christ, as the alone condition thereof. It is exhibited in gracious offers of it, for them to take hold of it by faith; with gracious calls for their doing so. In this respect, it is a *Covenant made with them*, as to all God's engagement in it; to take effect through their embracement of these promises, in a dependence on that condition.

And the above passages denote a special dispensation, toward the members of the invisible Church. These are blessed with an *experience* of the Lord's shewing his Covenant to them, by a supernatural illumination of their minds. They are enabled to take hold of it by an applying faith, as to both the condition and promises of it. They are brought into the bond of it; under the bond of God's gracious engagement to them, and of their dutiful engagement to him: So that they are severally and specially interested in that Covenant, unto eternal life. According to this view, it is *made with them*; for the glorious condition of it is made theirs, in God's imputation

* 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

† Psal. xxv. 14.

‡ Isa. lvi. 6, 7.

|| Ezek. xx. 37.

imputation thereof to them,—and the appropriation which they make of it to themselves by faith: And the promises of it are made theirs; as they enjoy a right to obtain a full accomplishment of all these, upon the ground of that fulfilled condition which is placed to their account.

§ VI. Though the Covenant of Grace be *less* extensive in its *objects*, it is *more* extensive in its *benefits*, than the Covenant of Works was or could have been. This Covenant extends to all mankind: But the other Covenant extends only to some of them, and comparatively few; though they are absolutely *a great multitude which no man could number, as the nations of them which are saved* *.

Yet the case is very different, with regard to the benefits of these two Covenants. Had the Covenant of Works been kept, there would have been a very high display of the divine goodness; in an advancement of all mankind, at length, to an immediate and heavenly enjoyment of God for ever. But, according to the Covenant of Grace,—there is the highest, and an united glory of all the divine excellencies, in the salvation of sinners. The holiness and justice of God are far more eminently displayed in this case, than in that of those who are punished with everlasting destruction: While the glory of their heavenly state, as *enthroned with GOD-MAN*,—far excelleth what could have belonged to that state, according to the Covenant of Works.

And, as to the benefits of the Covenant of Grace, they are altogether supernatural and spiritual. Nothing natural or material, or which is a natural object of bodily sense, as such,—has any place among those benefits, or in the purchase of Christ: Nothing but what is supernatural; a matter of spiritual experience,

* Rev. vii. 9.; xxi. 24.

rience, or an object of divine faith. A blessing upon material things, to those who are saved, belongs to the benefits of that Covenant; but this blessing is wholly an object of faith.—The curse of the broken Covenant of Works requires that the world should be upheld as at present; till all the natural seed of the first man be brought forth in successive generations, for partaking with him in the effect of that curse: And the Covenant of Grace requires the same thing, on behalf of the seed promised to Jesus Christ. But this Covenant provides for them all the blessings, only, of a spiritual salvation; including a special blessing upon their common enjoyments.

§ VII. The establishment of the Covenant of Grace is by *one act* of the divine pleasure and will. The INFINITE BEING is absolutely ONE; without any composition in his *being*, or in his *mind*. *His understanding is infinite* *; comprehending, in one act, all that is intelligible: He can have no succession of views, apprehensions or thoughts. And that establishment is therefore *one*, at once; consisting of no parts in God, of a glorious and indivisible Unity. Yet our finite minds cannot consider it, but as virtually including many things; compounded of many parts: Which we are warranted, as obliged, to consider severally; though not as separable, or as more than one thing in God.

S E C T. III.

Of the Origin of the Covenant of Grace.

§ I. THIS Covenant, as to the establishment of it, is originally IN GOD: Not like those divine works
or

* Psal. cxlvii. 5.

or dispensations which are only *from God*, as effects of his wisdom and power in time. It is what *he hath purposed in himself** : And so, it is of the same eternity with himself, there is not, nor ever was any conceivable moment in which it was not; or in which it might not have been, or might have been otherwise than as it is. We have to look as far up and as far back to this *establishment*, as to GOD-HEAD!

But it doth not originally lie in any perfections of the divine nature; for then, it would not be a Covenant of *Grace*, but of *natural necessity*. It lies originally in a *free determination* of the divine will; which, though not a necessary result of the divine perfections, is yet coeternal with these. It is *the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself**. He would have been the same in his infinite and essential perfections, of the same excellency and glory; though there had been no such establishment in the good pleasure of his will on behalf of fallen men, more than of fallen angels: But such is the glorious mystery of his will, concerning some of mankind!

§ II. This establishment is wholly made by the GRACE, the absolutely *free grace* of God; and is therefore properly called the *Covenant of Grace*. The whole reason of it lies in God himself, not in any thing without himself. And it lies directly, not in his *nature*, but in his mere *will*; in the sovereign *good pleasure* of him who, especially in this case, *giveth not account of any of his matters*†. That Covenant is made, only on behalf of some of mankind, without any reason, on their part, for such a distinguishing of them from others. It could not proceed on any foreseen good in them, as the reason of that distinction

* Eph. i. 9.

† Job xxxiii. 13.

tion; for there could be no distinguishing good in them to procure it, none but what was to proceed from it. God was WILLING to make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, whom he had afore prepared unto glory: As he saith—I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion *. The true and only reason of this whole matter, lies in that most remarkable address which Jesus made to the Father; *Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight* †.—Such is the supreme, the absolute, the unaccountable reign of *free Grace*, in the establishment of the Covenant of Grace: And the praise of the glory of this grace must not be taken away from it, in ascribing the same to any of the means through which that Covenant is brought to its accomplishment and effect; not even to that great mean, the mediatory undertaking and administration of Jesus Christ.

§ III. Some worthy men who could not, in any degree, be reckoned to mean any opposition to the doctrine of glorious Grace in that Covenant,—have yet been very much off their guard in teaching, (one with a remarkable diligence of repetition); that “the promises of the Covenant are the purchase of the blood of Christ, owing to the merit of Christ’s righteousness:” That “all these promises are the price of his blood, the purchase of his obedience and death:” That “the condition of the Covenant is the foundation of the promises:” That “to Christ’s fulfilling the condition of the Covenant, both the *making* and performing of the promise of eternal life is owing *allenarly*:” That the several parts of Christ’s *undertaking*, are the grounds upon which God *made* the several *promises*; these promises being also severally *grafted* (as it is called) upon

* Rom. ix. 15, 22, 33. † Matth. xi. 26.

upon the several promises peculiarly made to him, about assistance and acceptance in the work of his humbled estate:—And that the several *promises* do flow from Christ's several *offices*, as their proper *fountain*.

But if the great promise of eternal life, with all the other promises comprehended therein,—be the purchase of the blood of Christ, merited by his righteousness; all of them the price of his blood, the purchase of his obedience and death; so that the *making* as well as performing of them, is wholly owing to his fulfilling the condition of the Covenant: Then it cannot be a Covenant of *Grace*, with regard to God the Father; it can only be a Covenant of *purchase*, a Covenant of *justice*. For the promises are *the all* of that Covenant, beside the condition of it; and it will not be said that Christ purchased the condition, purchased his own purchase! Thus Christ would have purchased the Covenant of Grace; inconsistently with its being such a Covenant, on the Father's part: And all *grace* would be expelled from that Covenant, but the grace of the Mediator. Mediatory grace would be the original and only grace of the Covenant: As if there had been no grace, in the Father's setting him up from everlasting to that office; no grace in the Father's calling him to it, as he did not take this honour unto himself *. It is no proper salve in this case, to say,—that “ the love of
“ God produced a proposal of the great and pre-
“ cious promises, upon terms consistent with his
“ justice; and Christ accepted:” When the turning of the proposal into a purpose and promise, is made to depend upon this acceptance.

The truth of the matter is,—that all the promises have their whole original and foundation in the absolute sovereignty of the grace of God, of the God-head

* Prov. viii. 13.; Heb. v. 4, 5.

head in the person of the Father. And the whole mystery of the condition of the Covenant,—of Christ's undertaking, of his fulfilling all righteousness, of his obedience unto death, of his redeeming and purchasing blood; all this is to be considered as the great mean devised by the manifold wisdom of God, for bringing the promises to an accomplishment,—in a manner glorifying to all the perfections of God, and honouring to his law.

All that Mean, all that condition of the Covenant, is wholly subordinated to the promises; and the promises no way to it. Instead of the condition of the Covenant being the foundation of the promises, the promises are the foundation of the condition; this being what infinite grace and wisdom has provided in a subserviency to the promises, for their proper accomplishment. Instead of the promises flowing from Christ's offices, his offices flow from the promises; as the great subordinate mean for their accomplishment. The peculiar promises to Christ, about his assistance and acceptance,—are subordinated to the promises of salvation through him, as the mean is to the end; instead of the promises of salvation through him being subordinated unto, or (what is called) grafted upon the peculiar promises to him.

It is true, that all promised *blessings* are what flow from Christ's offices,—and are all purchased by him: But it is not true, that the *promises* themselves are so.—An architect, of his mere pleasure, *purposes* to have a house built; and draws a *plan* of it: Upon which he gets workmen employed, unto a finishing of the house. Now it would be quite absurd to say, that the architect's *purpose* and *plan* was owing to the skill and labour of the workmen: But it would be very proper to say, that the *execution* thereof is so.—In like manner, the whole blessings promised in the Covenant of Grace are the purchase of Christ;

Christ; and they flow through his several offices: But that is by no means the case with regard to the promises themselves. The whole mediatory interposal belongs, not to the *obtaining*, but to the *execution* of the glorious purpose and plan of free grace in the establishment of that Covenant.

S E C T. IV.

Of the glorious Parties concerned in the Establishment of the Covenant of Grace.

§ I. As hath been observed, the establishment of this Covenant is *in* GOD; when there were no parties without him, or beside him, to be concerned in the making of it. Yet, as being a Covenant, it could not be established but among *parties*; and these parties could only be in the *Godhead*. It therefore necessarily supposes a *plurality*, or *Trinity* of Persons in the Godhead. And there is nothing more plainly or expressly set forth, in the revelation which God hath made of himself, than the doctrine of the *Holy Trinity*; that the GODHEAD subsists in THREE PERSONS, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

According to the Scripture-testimony,—*There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: And these three are one* *. They are THREE; *three Persons*, as each is capable of *bearing record*: And they are ONE, in distinction of merely *agreeing in one*; which can only mean that they are but ONE BEING.—At the baptism of JESUS, *one* of the *three*,—the FATHER spoke of him from heaven; and the SPIRIT descended upon him †. The *absolute* dedication which is made of persons in baptism, can be to God only; and it is to the FATHER,

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the

* 1 John v. 7. † Matth. iii. 16, 17.

the SON, and the HOLY GHOST *. And *personal characters* are most unquestionably ascribed to these THREE: The FATHER *sends* the HOLY GHOST, and the SON *sends* him; and he *comes* †. These are some of the direct testimonies to this glorious truth, that there are THREE PERSONS in the same GODHEAD; and the Scripture abounds with ascriptions of *personal actions* to each of them.

Horrible blasphemies are now propagated through the British dominions, in the most open manner, without fear or shame,—against the THREE-ONE-GOD; by which the inhabitants thereof are fast ripening for a day of his vengeance. There can be no reason for disbelieving a *Trinity of Persons* in the Godhead, more than for disbelieving the *Godhead*; both being equally incomprehensible by finite minds: No reason for being *Anti-trinitarians*, more than for being *Atheists*. And it is even an outrage upon reason,—that minds which cannot comprehend the infinite BEING, should yet presume to judge about what *manner of subsistence* is competent to Him. His own testimony, in this matter, is to be believed; on the pain of being punished with everlasting destruction from his presence, and from the glory of his power ‡.

§ II. There are two *contracting parties* in the Covenant of Grace; the *first and second Persons* of the *Holy Trinity*, the FATHER and the SON. Betwixt these, that Covenant was made and established, as hath been explained elsewhere ||. And they entered into it as the *first and second Persons*, as the *Father* and the *Son*; for they had not any other distinguishing characters before entering into that Covenant, under which they could do so,—according to the plainest

* Matth. xxviii. 19. † John. xiv. 26.; xv. 27.; xvi. 7.

‡ Part I. Chap. II. Sect. I. § I. 2dly.

|| Sect. I. and Part I. Chap. II. Sect. I. § I. 5thly; § III.

plainest testimony of the Scripture *. It is but very lately that a frantic and pernicious imagination has been broached to the contrary.

And, in the making of this Covenant,—the *Son* was most willingly constituted by the *Father*, as the *sne Mediator between God and men*; in a state of *mediatory inferiority* to the *Father*, though in a state of *divine equality* with him. Such is the case, frequently set forth to us in Scripture as a matter of faith. But how this transaction could take place between two *equal* persons in the same Godhead, the *mediatory inferiority* consisting most fully with the *divine equality* and *oneness*,—is a matter far exceeding finite comprehension; yet cannot, without impiety, be disbelieved on account of its being incomprehensible.

§ III. The *third Person* of the *Trinity*, the HOLY SPIRIT, was a *concurring Party* in the making of the Covenant of Grace. A peculiar employment or office concerning it was assigned to him, and most willingly accepted of by him. He was to be employed about the accomplishment of this Covenant; in the revelation of it, and the application of it to the souls of men: So employed as *the Spirit of the Father* and *of the Son*, to be *sent* by them upon that work. JESUS gave a most comfortable assurance of this to his disciples †: And all such employment of the SPIRIT in time, must be considered as the fruit of his having accepted the assignment which was made of it to him from eternity. According to the divinity of his character,—what he does graciously in time, could not but have been the matter of his engagement before all time; as a *concurring party* in the Covenant of Grace: For proceeding, according to his office, in

* John iii. 35.; v. 22.; 1 John i. 3.; iv. 14.; 2 Pet. i. 17.

† John xvi. 7,—15.

in an exact conformity to what was therein settled betwixt the *Father* and the *Son*. Therefore Jesus said concerning him; *He shall not speak of himself, but whatsoever he shall hear that shall he speak.*

S E C T V.

Of the Maker of the Covenant of Grace.

THE *Making* of this Covenant was by the *first Person* of the *Holy Trinity*; by *God the Father*, or the *GODHEAD* in the person of the *Father*. This appears from what has been already proposed; and is too evident in Scripture, for needing any special proof. It is therefore to be observed, concerning all the mention to be made of *God* in this part of the subject; that it is always to be understood as peculiarly meant of *God the Father*, acting in the same *Godhead* which belongs also to the *Son* and *Spirit*. And,

§ I. From all eternity, *God foresaw* the whole world of mankind in a ruinous condition; sunk into a state of sin and misery, from which they could not recover themselves. He foresaw this as the infallible consequence of his leaving the first man, in absolute sovereignty, to the freedom of his own will; which could not but issue in his ruining himself and all his posterity, by the breach of the Covenant of Works.

God condescends to our capacities, in speaking of himself as *foreseeing* and *foreknowing*; words which denote a seeing or knowing of what is *future*, or what is to take place in some distant period. But there could be nothing really of this sort, with respect to *God*: Every thing is *present* to him, who at once filleth all eternity and all time with his presence. The ruined condition of mankind in time,
was

was therefore *present* to him from all eternity: They were then before him, under his eye, through all their generations; as having *destroyed themselves*, and lying *polluted in their own blood* *.

§ II. There was a most free *purpose of Grace* in God, from all eternity, concerning some of ruined mankind. These were objects of his *everlasting love*; a love of good will toward them, for recovering them from their fallen estate. He did *foreknow* them; not in the way of mere apprehension, as he foreknew all things,—but in the way of gracious cognizance: And he did *predestinate* them *to be conformed to the image of his Son*; to be so restored unto a glorious perfection of nature, far excelling man's primitive integrity †. They were then *predestinated unto the adoption of children*: They were then *predestinated to an inheritance of eternal life*; *according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will* ‡.

§ III. God's purpose of Grace toward them, could not be accomplished by a mere *efficacy of his power*. The whole world of creatures was immediately, and most wonderfully, produced out of nothing by his power: *He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast*. But the new creation, the world of saved mankind, could not be produced in that manner. His power could not be exerted, in opposition to the indefeasible claims of his holiness and justice, and his broken law. It was indispensably necessary, that the glory of his holiness and justice should be maintained; by a faithful execution of the law-curse upon them, as well as the other world of sinful men: And that none of them should be saved but upon a full reparation of the breach of the law;

* Hof. xiii. 9.; Ezek. xvi. 6.

† Rom. viii. 29.

‡ Eph. i. 5. 11.

law; in their fulfilling all the righteousness of it, as the condition of eternal life.

§ IV. The accomplishing of God's purpose of Grace toward them, was therefore *absolutely impossible*; according to any device which could fall within the compass of any finite mind: As they were absolutely incapable of satisfying those claims. But the manifold wisdom of God was sufficient, for devising an effect of this natural impossibility. He says, concerning a lost sinner,—*Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom: I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people;—my Covenant shall stand fast with him* *. He called his own *Eternal Son* to the office of a Mediator for these ruined men; who, of his own free Grace, did most willingly undertake the charge. He was set up, for becoming one of the people, in an assumption of their nature; as substituted into their place, having them stated in himself as their *Surety*. The law-curse was to have a full execution upon them in him; to the highest glory of the holiness and justice of God: and the breach of the law was to be fully repaired by them in him; the righteousness of it to be fulfilled by them in him, unto a *magnifying* the law and making it *honourable*. *O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out* †!

§ V. According to that device of infinite wisdom which has been expressed, God the *Father* did establish a Covenant of Grace with his eternal *Son*; for the salvation of all those who were the objects of his *purpose* of grace. And, in this Covenant, the purpose

* Job. xxx. 24; Psal lxxxix. 19. 28.

† Rom. xi. 33.

pose bears the form of a *promise*; a manifold and most comprehensive promise by God the Father: *His own purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus; the purpose and grace of eternal life; which God that cannot lie promised before the world began* *.

S E C T. VI.

Of the Undertaker in the Covenant of Grace.

The *eternal SON*, our LORD JESUS CHRIST, is the undertaking *Surety* in that Covenant. The need of every perishing sinner for whom he undertook, had a *say* to him, before the sinner's existence: O LORD, *I am oppressed, undertake for me* †: And to this say he was most graciously attentive, under the Father's ordination of him to that office; having his *delights, from everlasting, with the sons of men* ‡.—The true and supreme GODHEAD of JESUS CHRIST, as the same *one God* with the Father, has been somewhat considered in another place ||. And some view is to be taken of him in this place, on two particular heads; on the head of his *eternal Sonship*, before proceeding to that of his *mediatory state*.

H E A D I.

Of the Eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ.

THE doctrine of his being the SON of GOD by *eternal generation*—is now very much opposed, by many persons of different denominations: And therefore

* 2 Tim. i. 9.; Tit. i. 2. † Isa. xxxviii. 14.

‡ Prov. viii. 23. 31.

|| Part I. Chap. II. Sect. I. § I. 1/2.

fore it may be seasonable to enlarge upon this head, as of essential concern to the present subject *.

§ I. It is to be evinced, that JESUS CHRIST is the SON of GOD by ETERNAL GENERATION. Some Scriptures give direct evidence, that his *generation* was from all *eternity*. But other evidences, that the character of SON belonged to him before his incarnation, are the same upon the matter: As it was never pretended, nor can be imagined, that he acquired this character in any preceeding point of *time*; and, therefore, his having been *the Son* of God before he was made flesh,—must mean his having been so by *eternal generation*. For this, the following arguments are proposed.

1st, That Jesus Christ is the Son of God by *eternal generation*, appears from *Psal. ii. 7. I will declare the decree: The LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.*

It is beyond all doubt that CHRIST is the person spoken to by God the Father in the latter part of this verse; considering the direct application which is made

* An infamous book was published in the year 1776; entitled, [*The TRUE SONSHIP of CHRIST investigated*]: In which, not only the *eternal* Sonship of Christ is most boldly denied; but a quite *new* sort of *temporal* Sonship is ascribed to him,—upon a horrid scheme of *animalcular generation*. A *sermon* was soon after preached and published by the present writer; entitled, [*An ANTIDOTE against a NEW HERESY, concerning the TRUE SONSHIP of JESUS CHRIST: With an appendix, concerning the wonderful theory of ANIMALCULAR GENERATION; as lately brought in by a Clergyman of the Church of Scotland, for the proper ground of the fundamental article of the Christian religion!*] This Antidote was remarkably blessed for a quick dispatch of that heresy: And the reasonings on the present head are extracted from that performance, with some variations; omitting many other things which it contains.—That monstrous heresy appears to be no more; farther than that the shameful book containing it still exists: But new attacks are yet a-making upon the doctrine of the *eternal generation*.

made of it to him in the New Testament * : And that these words comprehend the proper doctrine of his generation. The only question therefore is, about the *day* here meant,—to which that generation is referred.

And, in general, it cannot be an interpreting, but a gross impugning of the text; to change the assertion which it makes of Christ's Sonship *as what then was*, into a mere prophecy of it *as what would afterwards be*: Or to turn it off from all present respect to any day existing in David's time; as if it had only a prophetical respect, to some day in the future period of the manifestation of Christ in the flesh. For so, the words might have this strange paraphrase put upon them: *Thou shalt become my Son about a thousand years hence; in some future day, at such a distance of time, I will beget thee.*

The applications made of this text to Christ in the New Testament, bear not the smallest appearance of referring it to such a day: Farther than that, in one instance *, it is quoted with a reference to his resurrection. But not so much as any hint is there given, that he did then *become* the Son of God; he was then only *declared to be the Son of God with power* †. And an application is made of this text to him by the great Apostle, in such a manner as to bear a plain argument against explaining it of any such day: *Christ glorified not himself to be made an High Priest, but he that said unto him; Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten thee* ‡. For Christ was not but lately made an High Priest, only in or after his incarnation. He was so before ||, as much as he was constituted a Mediator before, even from everlasting: And his *Sonship* is there set forth, as of the same antiquity with his *Priesthood*.

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* Acts xiii. 33.

† Rom. i. 4.

‡ Heb. v. 5.

|| Psal. cx. 4.

This psalm, indeed, was chiefly prophetical of great events about the Messiah and his kingdom, in the Church-state among the Gentiles; after his ascension: But it was not so prophetical as to be a mere prophecy; bearing no application to the state of matters in David's time. For the second Person of the glorious Trinity was then the *Messiah*, the LORD's *anointed*, the *Christ*; as in the second verse of this psalm. He was then the Head and undertaking Surety of the New Covenant; yea had been so from all eternity. He was then a *King upon the holy hill of Zion*, as in the sixth verse. Accordingly the conspiracy which took place in David's time, among the heathens around, against the interests of the Jewish Church and nation, was principally a conspiracy *against the LORD and against his anointed*,—his Christ; as the public interests of the Jewish people, did especially belong to these glorious parties. Therefore no argument can be taken, with any shadow of reason, from the prophetical nature of the psalm; for turning the assertion which it makes of Christ's *Sonship*, into a mere prophecy.

It is manifestly inconsistent with every principle of justice to the form of the words, as well as to the doctrine contained in them,—to explain this *Sonship* as the *matter* of the *decree*; and so as a future event, which the second Person of the holy Trinity had to declare concerning himself. The *matter* of the decree is evidently set forth in the next two verses: And the *Sonship* is evidently set forth as the *ground* upon which that decree proceeds. The *Sonship* must therefore have been as ancient as the decree; and every decree of God was from everlasting.

What *day*, then, are we to understand, as meant in the text referred to? It cannot be understood, as properly denoting any one of *man's days*; either in David's time, or afterwards. It can only be understood

stood of *God's day*, the day of *eternity*: Which, with God, is all *one day*, without any yesterday or to-morrow;—one permanent day, without any succession of parts; a perpetual *now*, coexisting with every one of man's days. As the great *Luther* observes, upon this place: “If we will speak as the thing is,—*to-day*, every day and always, the Son of God is begotten; for, in eternity there is neither past nor future, but a perpetual *to-day*.” And, as he farther observes, upon this text; “to-day is here to be taken for God's time, not ours: For God is not there speaking with us, but with him who is with God beyond time*.”

Nor is this the only place where *eternity* is represented under the character of a *day*, one day. A text runs in our translation (by the help of the supplement *was*); *before the day was, I am He*†. But the strict and just rendering is, *from the day I am He*; from the day of eternity, from all eternity. In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, which was used in our Lord's time, it is rendered , *from the beginning*‡.

Upon the whole, it is plain that our Lord's generation as the Son of God, was not in any day of *time*; but in the day of *eternity* ||.

2dly, That Jesus Christ is the Son of God by *eternal generation*, appears from *Psal. ii. 12. Kifs the Son, lest he be angry*.—These words enjoin a most important duty towards *the Son*; the same glorious Person whose generation is represented in the seventh verse of

* *Folus in loco.*† *Isa. xliii. 13.*‡ *Pol. in loc.*

|| It is a vain objection, that, for about three thousand years before David's time,—the characters of *Father* and *Son* in the holy Trinity, were not revealed. The infinite ONE was the proper judge, how revelation should gradually proceed: And it should be enough to us, that this mystery is revealed; was so, even in the Jewish Church.

of this psalm. And upon whom was the duty enjoined? was it only upon *kings and judges of the earth*, who should live in gospel times; so as it should be made no account of by any person, for hundreds of years after David's time? The text would then bear this shocking paraphrase; "Ye kings and judges who shall live in the Gentile churches above a thousand years after my time, KISS, *pay homage*,—to one who shall then *become* THE SON; though, as to what he presently is, or whether he presently be at all,—I have nothing presently to say."

That base abuse of the words cannot be evited, but by taking them in their plain sense; as containing a prescription of *then present* duty, to persons *then* in being, concerning an object *then* existing as *the Son*: Containing the same prescription, likewise, to persons through all succeeding generations.

The words were applicable to the case of all, in David's time, who in any measure enjoyed the revelation then made of the great MESSIAH*: Even to some kings and judges then around Judea; who were not utter strangers, however much enemies, to that revelation. But they were more particularly applicable to all the judges and people in David's kingdom; and likewise to all the kings and judges and people of following generations, in Israel and Judah: Though having a principal respect to those who were to exist under the gospel-dispensation.

And as these words contain an enjoinder of *then present* duty, upon persons *then* in being; it could not but be toward one who *then was* THE SON,—and therefore such from everlasting.

3dly,

* Though the call is expressly given, only to *kings and judges of the earth*; it equally belongs to persons of all other denominations: It must equally belong to all whose duty it is, as in the close of the verse, to *put their trust in him*.

3dly, That Jesus Christ is the Son of God by *eternal generation*, appears from Psal. xlv. 6. *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*: Compared with Heb. i. 8. *But unto to the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.*

God the Father was there introduced, as speaking to God the Messiah; and speaking to him of what *then* was the case of a *throne* which he then had: For he was then sitting upon a throne in the Jewish Church and nation; as the Scripture most expressly testifieth*. But the Apostle is positive, that what was then said was said to *the Son*; and therefore to him who *then* was *the Son*, as having ever been so. For it is quite unsufferable to pretend,—that though these words, as applied by the Apostle, were *become true* in his time, yet they would have been *false* in David's time; if then applied in the same present sense, to one who was not *then* THE SON,—who then had no existence as such.

4thly, That Jesus Christ is the Son of God by *eternal generation*, appears from Prov. viii. 24, 25. *When there were no depths I was brought forth:—Before the mountains were settled; before the hills was I brought forth.*

It is a striking instance of what lengths one may be left to go, for serving the purpose of error; when presuming to explain away these verses, and that whole chapter, from any application to the second Person of the adorable Trinity. The party speaking is *Wisdom*: And, as one observes; “none in the “ancient Church, no not the Arians themselves, “did ever question, that by *Wisdom* here is understood the *Son of God*†.” Nor has it ever been questioned by any till now, but upon *Secinian* principles.

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* Isa. vi. 1; John xii. 41.

† Wisheart's *Theologia*, p. 748.

The term *Wisdom*, applied to God, is naturally the character of an attribute. But it is frequently in the book of Proverbs, as elsewhere in Scripture *, determined by the context to a metaphorical sense; as the character of a person †. And *Wisdom*, as speaking in the two verses now quoted, is most evidently determined by the context to a metaphorical sense, as the character of a person; of none other than the second Person of the eternal Trinity.

Could God's attribute of *wisdom* say; *I was brought forth before the mountains were settled, set up from everlasting?* Could it say, *I was by him as one brought up with him?* Could this attribute be properly brought in saying,—*I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth, and my delights were with the sons of men:* When all this, if meant of an attribute, would have properly belonged to the attribute of *Grace*? The same *Wisdom* is brought in (chap. i. 23.), saying,—*Turn you at my reproof; behold I will pour out my spirit unto you:* And must we understand all this as meaning the reproof of an attribute, the spirit of an attribute! A turning away of these passages from a proper application to Christ, as the *personal Wisdom of God*, is a most violent wresting of them; a turning of them to absurdity and nonsense †.

And this personal *Wisdom* says, *I was brought forth*; that he was so before this world had a being, from all eternity. Nor can any rational sense be put upon

* Luke xi. 49. ; Matth. xxiii. 34.

† Where wisdom is twice mentioned, in the 5th and 14th verses of this chapter, there are two *different* words for it in the original; *both* different from that used for *wisdom* in the 1st and 12th verses.

‡ It is shameful to object, that the Hebrew word rendered *wisdom* is *feminine*. So is the Greek word rendered *church* in the New Testament; and the word rendered *person*, in Heb. i. 3.

upon this, but as denoting the *eternal generation*; directly affirmed by Christ of himself, who is the personal *Wisdom* of God: The word being the very same in the original which David used [*Psal.* li. 5.] for expressing his own *generation*; when he confessed that he was *shapen* (brought forth) *in iniquity*.

5thly, That Jesus Christ is the *Son* of God by eternal generation, appears from *Prov.* xxx. 4. *Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? Who hath gathered the wind in his fists? Who hath bound the waters in a garment? Who hath established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his Son's name, if thou canst tell?*

There is another instance, of the desperate shifts that one may be driven to for supporting error; in an attempt of explaining away this whole passage from any application to God. And what then is the sense put upon it? It is just taken for a defiance given by the Holy Spirit, to tell the name of the mere man, or (if he were dead) of that man's son, who had done the great things mentioned in these words. But this is to bring in the Holy Spirit as bidding defiance to a fiction, as fighting with a shadow. For none had ever pretended, that any mere man had ever done these things: Such an absurd and blasphemous imagination, had never entered into the mind of any man or devil.

The eternal God had, in a figurative sense, both *descended* and *ascended* *: To him belongeth the absolute disposal of *wind* and *waters*; he had *established all the ends of the earth*. Agur, in the preceding verse, had made a humble profession of his ignorance *of the Holy*; of that *Holy One*. And, in this verse, he charges ignorance of him upon all; upon every one: As Zophar had done before him; *Canst thou*
by

* *Exod.* xix. 18.; xxxiv. 5.; *Gen.* xvii. 22.; xxxv. 13.

*by searching find out God? canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection * ?*

Now this *Holy One*, the *God* expressly mentioned in the next words, is said to have then had a *Son*; a *Son* when he established all the ends of the earth; and so, from everlasting: Whose *Sonship*, whose name as such, was of most incomprehensible glory †.

6thly, That Jesus Christ is the *Son of God* by *eternal generation*, appears from Micah v. 2. *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah; yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be Ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*

These words were an illustrious prophecy about Christ; as expressly applied to him in the New Testament ‡. A temporal and future *coming forth* was there ascribed to him; a generation in time as a man, to be born in Bethlehem. But he had likewise ascribed to him a *going forth from of old, from everlasting*. And, as there was no external manifestation or operation of God from everlasting; these words can bear no other sense than that of his *eternal generation*: No other *going forth* can be imagined, as competent to him from everlasting. The *coming forth* unquestionably denoted one sort of generation, which was to belong to him as man: And the *going forth* could only denote another sort of generation, which had belonged to him as the second Person of the divine Trinity, from everlasting.

It can be no just objection, against this sense of the words; that *goings forth* are mentioned in the plural number. This manner of expression serves to represent the incomprehensible perfection and excellency of his *eternal generation*. But it is no way inconsistent with the *unity* of that *generation*, the real unity of his *going forth*: More than the mention of
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* Job. xi. 7.

† Judges xiii. 18.

‡ Matth. ii. 6.

the *multitude* of God's mercies, and of his *seven spirits* *,—can be inconsistent with the *unity* of his *mercy*, and of the *Holy Spirit* ; when properly serving to denote the incomprehensible fulness and glory of both.

7thly, That Jesus Christ is the Son of God by *eternal generation*, appears from *John* v. 18. *Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath ; but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God : Compared with John* x. 33, 36. *For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy ; because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God :—Say ye, thou blasphemest ; because I said I am the Son of God ?*

We find here that the Jews sought to kill Jesus for *blasphemy*. Wherein did the pretended blasphemy lie ? It lay in his *making himself equal with God, making himself God*. And upon what ground did they reckon that he had made himself such, or claimed his being such ? It was wholly on this ground ; that he *said that God was his Father*,—that he *said, I am the Son of God*.

Now, it is perfectly evident,—that Jesus sustained the construction which they so put upon what he had said ; as perfectly just : For the whole defence which he made, proceeded upon the acknowledged truth of that construction.

But it is grossly absurd to imagine,—that it could ever have entered into any one of their minds, to put such a construction upon his calling *God his Father*, and calling himself *the Son of God* ; if it had been understood of his having *become* the Son of God, only about thirty-three years before. Never one of them imagined, concerning the claim of any sort of *temporal Sonship* to God,—that it was the same as a claim of *equality with God*,* a claim of *being God*.

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* Psal. li. 1. ; Rev. iv. 5. ; v. 6.

They allowed a claim of some such sonship as competent to *angels*, to the *first man*, to many *other men*, to *themselves*; without ever pretending or dreading, that there was any blasphemy in the matter *.

They knew that there could be but *one God*; and that therefore a being *equal with God*, was the same as *being God*. They knew from the Scriptures of the Old Testament, the doctrine of a *Sonship* in the Godhead: And they knew, from these Scriptures,—that the *divine Son*, to be manifested in the flesh, was the divine Saviour or Messiah promised unto them. What therefore they charged upon Jesus as blasphemy, was plainly this; that he gave himself out to be the *Son of God* in the sense which was peculiar to the promised Messiah, whom they would not allow him to be.

The just construction which they put upon his words, could thus have no consistent sense; but when understood of him as the *Son of God* in the *same nature*, by a Sonship inseparable from Godhead,—and therefore, as the Son of God from everlasting.

8thly, That Jesus Christ is the *Son of God* by *eternal generation*, appears from *John* x. 30. *I and my Father are one*. There our Lord evidently spoke of himself as the *Son*, when speaking of God as the *Father*; affirming that he the *Son*, under the character of *Sonship*, was *one* with the *Father*,—one with him in nature or essence. But his humanity was not, could not be taken *into* the divine nature or essence, to an oneness in Godhead; though wonderfully united *unto* his divine person. He had therefore a character of *Sonship*, abstracting from his humanity,—in which he was *one* with the Father, the same one God; and must have ever been so, in that character.

9thly, That Jesus Christ is the *Son of God* by *eternal*

* Job xxxviii. 7.; Luke iii. 38.; Gen. vi. 2.; Hos. i. 10.

nal generation, appears from 1 John iv. 9, 10, 14. *God sent his only begotten Son, into the world, that we might live through him :—Sent his Son, to be the propitiation for our sins :—The Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.*

One may as well make any thing of Scripture, abusing it to serve any purpose; as to pretend that the *Son* here mentioned as sent,—is mentioned as *made the Son*, in his *being sent*: Or that the *sending* of the *Son* did effectuate his *generation* as the *Son*. The *Father sent the Son, his Son, his only begotten Son*: And this language, unless it be reduced to an uncertain sound, by explaining it inconsistently with any natural use of language, must mean,—that the characters of *Father* and *Son* existed before the sending: that, as already bearing these characters, the *one* did *send*, and the *other* was sent: that therefore the *Son* who was sent, was such *before* he was sent,—the only begotten *SON from everlasting*.

An argument of the same nature, lies in *Heb. i. 1, 2. God hath spoken unto us by his Son,—by whom also he made the worlds.* It would be a gross contradicting of these words,—to say that he *was not the Son*, when this visible world was made by him; or till about four thousand years afterwards. By the *Son* the *Father* made the worlds; by him who *was the Son* before all worlds.

10thly, That Jesus Christ is the *Son* of God by *eternal generation*, appears from 1 John v. 7. *There are Three that bear record in heaven; the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: And these Three are One.*

These words contain the most eminent display of the mystery of the glorious Trinity. The second Person, indeed, is not here called *the Son*; but the *Word*, the personal Word. Yet, of necessity, he must be here understood *as the Son*, as the second Person under that character: For this is the only imaginable reason,

reason, why the first Person is here called the *Father*. And so, without allowing the character of *Son* to have a place in the Trinity, as much as the character of *Father*; and without allowing both these personal characters to be as ancient as the Trinity of persons in the Godhead; all consistent sense of these precious words must be abolished.

§ II. The evidences which have been set forth, are sufficient for establishing the doctrine of the *eternal generation* of Jesus Christ as the *Son of God*. He frequently called himself the *Son of man*, as having become so in his incarnation. But wherever he is called the *Son of God*, it is with respect to his *eternal generation*. This *Sonship* is indeed set forth in the form of a *promise*, as what should afterwards be; *I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son* *. But this did no way signify his beginning in time to be such; it only respected a glorious manifestation in time, of his being such: As, in Scripture,—a thing is said to be made, when but eminently manifested to be. So was Jesus, in and after his resurrection, *made both Lord and Christ* †; gloriously revealed in these characters, which he had borne as really before. So was the *counsel of peace* promised to be, though it had been from everlasting ‡.—And Jesus Christ is the *Son of God* as he hath become *God-man*; his character of *Sonship* not excluding, but including that consideration of him: His assumption of humanity adds unto, but no way alters the state of his divine personality.

§ III. The eternal generation of the Son of God is altogether *inconceivable* by us, as to the *manner* of it: Being wholly a matter of faith, *that* it is; and no way a matter of reason, as to *how* it is. The finite

* Heb. i. 5. † Acts. ii. 36. ‡ Zech. vi. 13.

nite mind can have no proper conception, but of finite things; absolutely incapable of fathoming what is infinite. And it is even absurd, to deny the eternal generation upon the ground of incomprehensibleness: When one may as well deny, on the same ground, the distinct subsisting of three Persons in one Godhead; yea, the very being and perfections of God.

And this eternal generation, which bears but a very faint allusion to the case of generation among men, cannot be brought into any proper comparison with it; as the divine perfections cannot be properly adjusted to any shadows of them among creatures. The way of the spirit, especially of the eternal Spirit, is not to be measured or tried by the standard of flesh and blood.—Yet this, of Jesus Christ as the Son of God, is infinitely the most *proper* and *perfect* generation: As the Son is of an absolutely perfect *likeness* to the Father*; and not only in a *like* nature, but in the very same *nature* with him.

§ IV. The eternal generation of the Son of God, doth not at all mean his deriving *Godhead* from the Father. It only means a deriving of *Personality* from him, in the same Godhead: And that not in any arbitrary way, or from the Father's will; but naturally, of the same original and eternal necessity which belongs to the divine existence. Though he is not the *Son* of *himself*, but of the *Father*; yet he is *God* of *himself*: He is of the same necessarily-existent, self-existent, underived, independent, absolutely eternal Godhead,—with God the Father.

§ V. The doctrine of *eternal generation*, doth necessarily belong to the doctrine of the *Holy Trinity*.
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* Heb. i. 3.

This incomprehensible and adorable mystery, which is essential to the Christian religion, is to be believed by us upon God's testimony concerning himself: That there are *three Persons* in the Godhead, of a mutual *inbeing*, without any composition; undivided and indivisible, in one infinite Being. They are called *first*, *second*, and *third Persons*,—not as terms of superiority, subordination, or dependence; but only as denoting an *order* of subsistence, in the same eternity of one independent existence. And these glorious Persons are distinguished from each other by personal characters, of personal properties and relations. But, if there be no *Father* and *Son* in the Trinity, there can be no such distinctions: No *personal* distinctions at all, among three divine Persons in one essence. And if all personal distinctions be lost, a Trinity of Persons must be given up with; or it must land in the distinction of three divine Beings,—*three Gods*.

As a well known author observes: “ The Sonship of Christ as a divine Person, and as by generation, even eternal generation,—is the distinguishing criterion of the Christian religion, upon which all the important doctrines of it depend. Without this, the doctrine of the Trinity can never be supported;—without this, the distinction of Persons in the Trinity can never be maintained: And, indeed without this, there is none at all; take away this, and all distinction ceases,—it is all over with the doctrine of the Trinity.”

* Dr. Gill's *Body of Divinity*, vol. i. p. 241.

H E A D II.

Of the Mediatory State of Jesus Christ.

HIS mediatory state arises from the mere gracious will or good pleasure of God; of the Godhead,—not as in the person of the SON, but as in the person of the FATHER. With regard to the Son, it bears the form of his *undertaking* to do the *Father's will*; all of his own free grace, as called into that state: He saith,—*I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will; but the will of him that sent me* *. For the *Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world* †. And his *one* undertaking may be explained, in different considerations of it.

§ I. The eternal Son, according to his Father's will, did undertake to be the *one Mediator* between God and a number of sinful men ‡. The breach which sin had made, could admit of no *immediate* friendly intercourse betwixt these parties; there could be no repairing of it, but by a *Mediator*. Each of these sinners needed a Mediator; And *none* of them *can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him* ||. Nor could the breach be repaired, by a mere persuasive influence upon the offended party; it was indispensably necessary that, on behalf of the offending party, the claims of his holiness and justice, and of his broken law, should be satisfied: Which no angels, more than men, could effectuate. The *eternal Son* alone was fit for being the *one Mediator*; and this he undertook to be, from a love to the sons of men which passeth knowledge.

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* John vi. 38.
John xvii. 9. 14.

† John iv. 14.
|| Psal. xlix. 7.

‡ 1 Tim. ii. 5.;

He undertook to be a mediatory PROPHET: To *come a light into the world*; for giving knowledge of salvation unto his people *. He undertook to be a mediatory PRIEST: *To make reconciliation for iniquity*, by an atoning sacrifice for their sin; *and to bring in everlasting righteousness*, by fulfilling all the righteousness of the law for them †. And he undertook to be a mediatory KING ‡: For subduing his people to himself; setting up a kingdom of grace in the visible Church, and in their souls; ruling and defending them; as also restraining and conquering all his and their enemies.—He thus undertook the whole employment of redeeming them by price, and power; of *bringing many sons unto glory* ||.

§ II. The eternal Son according to his Father's will, did undertake to be *God-man* Mediator; to become *God manifested in the flesh* §. He was to be incarnate; taking to himself a true body and a reasonable soul: Not as a *person*, distinct from his own divine person; but as a *nature*, assumed unto a subsistence in his divine person. He was thus to be a Mediator in the constitution of his person, as necessary to his being so by office; a middle person between God and men, as being himself both God and man in one person. It was only in human nature, that he could satisfy all the claims upon his people; in a state of serving and suffering. As *man*, he was to be capable of this; as *God*, he was capable of bearing up the human nature in that estate to the uttermost: And as *God-man* in one person,—his work in that estate was to be of infinite worth and efficacy; all-sufficient for the redemption of his people, to the highest and everlasting glory of the Three-one-God.

§ III.

* John xii. 46.

|| Heb. iii. 10.

† Dan ix. 24.

§ 1 Tim. iii. 16.

‡ Psal. ii. 6.

§ III. The eternal Son, according to his Father's will, did undertake to be a *Surety-Mediator* *. As such, he was substituted into the place of his people; made answerable for all their debt of obedience and punishment. He is thus the Head of the New Covenant, the Covenant-head of all his people; having them all represented before the Father, by and in himself. As truly as they were represented by the first man in the Covenant of Works, they are represented by Christ in the Covenant of Grace. As truly as they sinned in and fell with the *first man*, they obey and stand in and with the *second man*, the LORD from heaven. He was to satisfy all the claims of law and justice upon them, in having all these transferred to him as their Surety. He was to be made under the law of the Covenant of Works in their place; to fulfil all the righteousness of it for them: And he was to be made under the curse of that law, to bear all its effect upon himself for them. In this manner, he was to have them *justified*, and *made heirs according to the hope of eternal life* †.

§ IV. The eternal Son, according to his Father's will, did undertake to be a *humbled Mediator* ‡. He became a *Surety-Mediator* as *God-man*, for coming down into a most wonderful state of the deepest humiliation in human nature; as, in that state only, he could execute his Suretiship. He was to be humbled into the state of a *servant* for his people, under the *commanding* law of the Covenant of Works. He was to be humbled into the state of a sinner, even *made sin for them* ||, under the *curfing* law of the Covenant of Works. He was thus to be laid under all the *preceptive* obligation of that law for them, as being stated under it in their stead; having their col-

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lective

* Heb. vii. 22.

† Tit. iii. 7.

‡ Phil. ii. 7, 8.

|| 2 Cor. v. 21.

lective name transferred to him accordingly *: And he was to be laid under all the *penal* obligation of that law for them, as having all their iniquities laid on him by imputation; for suffering the whole penalty of death in their stead.

The first article of Christ's humiliation did lie in his stooping so amazingly low, as to assume human nature into himself.—Humiliation is of an equivocal sense. It sometimes only denotes a favourable or gracious condescendence toward an inferior; which, instead of demeaning, inhances the personal dignity of the superior. So the LORD is said to *humble himself*, and to *dwell with him that is of a humble spirit* †. But this doth not mean any personal humiliation, or any real degrading of the party so humbling himself; for it is competent to *the High and Lofty One that inhabiteth eternity*. So the Lord Christ, as now continuing his assumption of human nature in heaven, is not thereby humbled,—in the sense of personal humiliation or degradation; but only in the sense of most gracious condescendence.—Yet his first assumption of human nature, was a step of most deep personal humiliation. His assumption of it was not *one* thing, and his being humbled in it (as some have oddly imagined) *another* thing: For in his very act of assuming it, not after or in consequence of his doing so, *he made himself* (as to the state of his person) *of no reputation; and took upon him the form of a servant* ‡. He assumed it in a state of servile subjection to the law as a Covenant, under the sinless infirmities of human nature, in a most singular meanness of appearance,—under a most heavy load of imputed guilt, and under all the weight of the law-curse. Such was the humbled state of his humanity, of himself in that nature, as first assumed by him; but all that

* Isa. xlix. 3.

† Psal. cxiii. 6.; Isa. lvii. 15.

‡ Phil. ii. 7.

that is now fully over for ever. His humanity is now exalted to the highest glory which it could admit of; infinitely above all these circumstances of personal humiliation. And his divine glory therein shines forth without any veil upon it, as once; but, after a most ravishing manner, concentrated to human eyes in his manhood: In a state of glorious and everlasting condescendence toward his redeemed kinsmen, as ever holding communion with them in their own nature, upon the throne of his glory.

§ V. The eternal Son, according to his Father's will, did undertake to be an *exalted* Mediator. *God the Father raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; bath highly exalted him; and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places* *. According to this view, his exaltation belongs to the *promissory* part of the Covenant of Grace; as being the just reward and necessary consequence of his work in his estate of humiliation.—But he also, by his own power, *rose and revived; he ascended up on high; he sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high* †. And, according to this view, his exaltation belongs to his mediatory undertaking. When he had finished all his work of serving and suffering in his human nature, all his work of Suretiship in that nature,—so that he had no more use for it, in fulfilling the condition of the Covenant of Grace; yet he would not leave it to consume in the grave. He would have it raised up, and exalted to a most unparalleled glory in himself. He would thus have his people *raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places*, in his own person; as still inhabiting their nature, in their name ‡. He was to *enter into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for them; entering*
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* 1 Pet. i. 21.; Phil. ii. 9.; Eph. i. 20. † Rom. xiv. 9;
Eph. iv. 8.; Heb. i. 3. ‡ Eph. ii. 6.

by his own blood, unto a continual presentation of it before God on their behalf,—and so, in the nature to which that blood belonged *.

All this he undertook, concerning that nature in which he was to be humbled: To have it exalted, so as never more to be in a state of subjection to the law. Through the course of his humiliation, that nature, he in that nature, was to be in a state of subjection to the law as a Covenant of Works. But, in and by his death, that nature, he in that nature, became for ever dead to the law in that form; and it for ever dead to him, in respect of any further exaction upon him: For he became *the end* of it, having gone to the uttermost of both serving and suffering under it. And with regard to the law as only a *rule of life*, his human nature, he in that nature, was never under it for one moment. The law, as a covenant, could have had no *natural* claim upon him; none but altogether *supernatural*, in the supernatural constitution of the Covenant of Grace. And the law, as only a rule of life, could never have had any claim upon him at all. Though it had a *natural* claim upon a *human person*, it could have none at all upon a *human nature* in a *divine person*. He was to have it exalted on the throne of his glory; to a state of absolute supremacy above all law for ever; subsisting in his own person as the supreme Lawgiver. And it belonged to his undertaking,—that, in this exalted condition, he should bring his *many sons unto glory*; as *the Captain of their salvation* †.

S E C T. VII.

Of the Objects of the Covenant of Grace.

§ I. THIS Covenant was made, in an absolute freedom of grace, on behalf of corrupt and cursed sinners as the objects of it; and these were only sinners

* Heb. ix. 12. 24.

† Heb. ii. 10.

ners of mankind. These were the objects of it, not only as *without strength* to help themselves; but as likewise *ungodly*, as *enemies* to God *.

Some speculations have been broached, by way of accounting for the grace of God toward fallen men rather than fallen angels; making certain apologies for the sin of mankind, as not of any equal aggravation with that of the sinning angels. But such speculations cannot consist with the absolute sovereignty and freedom of grace toward them, when pretending to find some reason for it on their part; though there was every reason in them, why they might have been all left to perish in their estate of sin and misery. Moreover, if that apologizing for them, more than for devils, could infer any thing in the present case; it would infer an extending of grace equally to all mankind.

§ II. Only some of mankind-sinners are objects of the Covenant of Grace. The whole human race was under God's eye, through all their generations, as all in the same fallen estate; all equally sinful and miserable by nature, equally worthy of eternal death in hell, and equally under a natural impossibility of escaping it. But, in the absolute sovereignty of his grace, he distinguished some of them from all the rest; some whom he *bath from the beginning chosen to salvation*, before the world began †. These are called *God's elect*, according to the election of grace ‡. There is a certain number of them; such as cannot, and from eternity could not be increased or diminished by so much as one. They were chosen most individually, one by one: For *the Lord knoweth them that are his*; as *their names are written in heaven, in the book of life* ||. And not one of them can fail to obtain

* Rom. v. 6. 10. † 2 Thess. ii. 13. ‡ Tit. i. 1.;
Rom. xi. 5. || 2 Tim. ii. 19.; Luke x. 20.; Rev. xx. 15.

obtain what they were elected unto. They were elected unto a life of glory, in the eternal state; and likewise unto all the means thereof in time, both outward and inward. All the parts and circumstances of their salvation were settled in God's eternal purpose; as to the time and manner of their being brought into a state of grace, and of their being carried forward in it to eternal glory.

§ III. Their being singled out as the *objects* of the Covenant of Grace, was of *mere grace*: it did not proceed upon any consideration of what they were to be or do in time.—God certainly foresaw whatever they would be and do, preferably to all others. He foresaw that they would believe, repent, and walk in newness of life. But he did not foresee that they would do so, by an exercise of their own free wills and natural abilities. He foresaw it, in his own determination to make them such persons; to work a true faith in them, and to give repentance unto them,—and to quicken them, raising them up from their spiritual death in trespasses and sins. Their faith, repentance, and holy life—was therefore no *reason why* they were elected; but are only parts of the *salvation unto which* they were elected: They were originally objects of the Covenant of Grace considered as *sinners*, as *ungodly*, as *enemies to God*; *by nature the children of wrath, even as others* *.

§ IV. These objects of the Covenant of Grace were, by their election, stated in *Christ*; God having *chosen them in him, before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love* †. They were thus given to him; as he saith to the Father,—*thine they were, and thou gavest them me* :

* Acts v. 31.; Eph. ii. 3. 5. 8. † Eph. i. 4.

me *. Christ was the Father's *Elect* †: But though he is of infinite dignity above them,—being *the head of the body, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence*; yet his election was subordinated to theirs, as a mean to the end. He was not the cause of their election; he did not procure it, by any interposal or undertaking for them. They were elected to eternal life, of absolutely free grace; his election was the great ordinance of God, for effectuating the purpose of their election: And the act of free grace, by which they were elected, was an act giving them to him for that purpose; stating them *in him* as their Covenant-head, unto a future being in him by a mystical union with him.

§ V. Jesus Christ most graciously accepted the gift which was thus made of them to him, for all the purposes thereof; as he saith to the Father concerning them,—*all mine are thine, and thine are mine* †. He, as it were, took down all their names in a book, to be answerable for each of them; their *names are written in the Lamb's book of life* ||. Not one of their names have been, or can ever be blotted out of that book. He sometimes lets them see their names in it now, when he has brought them unto himself: And they will all be reading their names in that book, with raptures of admiration and praise, through all eternity.

S E C T. VIII.

Of the Condition of the Covenant of Grace.

§ I. THE word *condition* is sometimes used very improperly, to denote the mere connection of one thing with another; or with that of which it is only

* John xvii. 6.

† Isa. xlii. 1.

‡ John xvii. 10.

|| Rev. xiii. 8.; xxi. 27.

a mean or instrument. So, faith has been called a condition of pardon and acceptance in justification; of a saving interest in Christ, or of salvation through him: But to call faith the condition of the Covenant of Grace, is a downright abuse of the word; as well as a perversion of the doctrine of that Covenant. The word in its proper sense, and as used in the present case,—denotes that which in its own nature, or at least by paction, is meritorious of a promised benefit; and is the proper ground of a title to the same. So, perfect obedience was the proper condition of the Covenant of Works; to be meritorious of eternal life: Not indeed by any natural or intrinsic merit of that obedience, but by the paction or agreement which God condescended to make with the first man.

§ II. The condition of the Covenant of Grace, in the very nature of the thing, could be performable only by the *Head* of that Covenant; by the glorious Undertaker in it, and Surety of it: A condition which was to lie in his full performance of his undertaking, as to be made under the law. The condition of the Covenant of Works, as to which the first man soon failed, was transferred unto and undertaken by him; with the high addition, of his having to make full satisfaction for the breach of that Covenant.—In the *first* place, he was to present unto the law of that Covenant, as the representing Head of all his people,—the *human nature*, restored unto a state of perfect conformity to that law in his own person; *holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners* *. In the *next* place, he was to fulfil the whole righteousness of that law in this holy nature, by a life of perfect conformity to its *preceptive* part; in the name and on the behalf of all his people, bringing

* Heb. vii. 26.

ing in *everlasting righteousness* for them *. And finally, he was to take upon himself, for them, the whole *penalty* of that law: Thus to make reconciliation for iniquity *; a full satisfaction and atonement for all their sin, *putting it away by the sacrifice of himself* †.

§ III. This condition, as to be fulfilled by him, was to be meritorious of all blessings for his people unto eternal life. It was to be so, by paction or covenant-agreement: But it was to be so, likewise, by an intrinsic merit in its own nature.—He was not, like the first Covenant-head, to have any thing ado with the law for himself. His righteousness, though wrought out under the law, was yet to be *without the law* †; without, beyond, above all its *natural claim*, as it could have no such claim upon him. He owed nothing to it for himself, but only for his people: owing all for them, by a *supernatural* constitution. And, from the infinite dignity of his person as *God-man*, his whole performance under the law could not but be of infinite dignity: His atonement and righteousness were to be of infinite value and merit in their nature, for both putting away sin and purchasing eternal life on behalf of all his people; in his becoming, to them, *the end of the law for righteousness* ||.

To this one condition of the Covenant of Grace, and to this only, all merit belongs, in the matter of our salvation. And to ascribe any sort of merit, any deserving of good from God, to any thing that either sinners or saints can do,—is a gross indignity to Jesus Christ, a robbing him of his glory, a virtual nullifying of the New Covenant. For all the blessings of grace and glory, we must be wholly indebted

* Dan. ix. 25.

† Heb. ix. 26.

‡ Rom. iii. 21.

|| Rom. x. 4.

debted to him; to his fulfilled condition of the Covenant of Grace.

§ E C T. IX.

Of the Promises of the Covenant of Grace.

As the *condition* of the Covenant of Grace is the *Undertaker's* part, so the *promises* are the *Maker's* part of it; the part of God the *Father* in that Covenant. And,

§ I. All the promises of the Covenant are comprehended in *one* great promise: *This is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life* *. And this doth not merely respect the eternal life of glory, as to be enjoyed in heaven through eternity: it also respects all the blessings of grace to be enjoyed in time, as the beginnings of that life; according to Christ's declaration concerning his true disciples in their present state, *I give unto them eternal life* †.

The great promise of eternal life, comprehends in it *exceeding great and precious promises* ‡; which are laid out to all the members of the visible Church, in the holy Scriptures. The leading article of these, is the promise of giving the *Holy Spirit* to all the objects of the Covenant of Grace; in his manifold operations, graces and influences: More especially, as the *spirit of faith* ||. And the promises which were thus to take effect upon them were many,—but are generally reducible to their effectual calling, their justification, their adoption, their sanctification; with assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end: As also, the
perfected

* 1 John ii. 25.

† John x. 28.

‡ 2 Pet. i. 4.

|| Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.; 2 Cor. iv. 13.

perfected holiness and glorification of their souls at death; with the resurrection of their bodies in the last day, and their being then openly acknowledged and acquitted,—unto a being made perfectly blessed, in a full enjoying of God to all eternity. Moreover, with regard to their outward condition in this world, the great and precious promises extend to all that the Lord sees good and necessary for them; a New-Covenant right to all their common benefits, and a blessing upon their trials: With protection from, or support under, or deliverance out of temporal evils; according as the Lord should wisely order all things to work together for their good.

§ II. Many of these promises, which were to be *actively received* by them, were made *to them* from eternity; but made to them *in Christ*, as their New-Covenant Head. Seeing they did not then exist, but he did; these promises could not be made to them immediately, or in their own persons: They were all made to them in him, and immediately to him as their representative; this *grace was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began* *. As he was to be the glorious Head of the body, these promises were to take effect through him upon all the members of it. And they were to receive all these, only in a state of mystical union with him; he being the primary recipient of all the promises. Their receiving of all was to be in receiving him, and resting upon him for salvation; receiving him, unto a receiving of all in and with him: *All the promises of God being in him yea, and in him amen; unto the glory of God by us* †.

§ III. There were some of these promises more especially made *to Christ* concerning them: Promises containing

* 2 Tim. i. 9.

† 2 Cor. i. 20.

containing the *Father's* engagement to him on behalf of his spiritual seed; as to the effect of which, they were to be *passive*. It was insured, that *in Christ* they should all be made alive; and that his seed should endure for ever*. All things were most particularly and unalterably settled in these promises to him, concerning the *time* and *manner* of their being effectually called or born again; and all the variety of following *dispensations* toward them. Whatever prove to be the gracious events in these matters, must be considered as having been so settled in promises to Christ; for all must belong to the Father's *faithfulness* with him†. And,

1st, The precise *time* of the new birth of each, or of their being brought to Christ and united with him, was fixed; as to the moment of their natural lives in which it should take place. There was to be great variety here, according to the parable of the labourers sent into the vineyard; some *early in the morning*, some *about the third hour*, some *about the sixth and ninth hour*, and some *about the eleventh hour*‡. The inbringing of sinners to Christ is thus at very different times of their life in this world, yet absolutely fixed to some time of it; but, generally, in its more early periods. And, till that time, they were not only to be under the common care of Providence, as to their preservation and natural enjoyments; but were to be secretly under a special and gracious care thereof, though still in themselves *children of wrath even as others*: And they were likewise to be preserved from falling into that *sin* which is *unto death*||.

2^{dly}, The precise *manner* was fixed, according to which they should be brought to Christ in their several times. Some were to be first laid under an efficacy of the law upon their consciences, for a shorter
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* 1 Cor. xv. 22.; Psal. lxxxix. 36. † Psal. lxxxix. 24.

‡ Matth. xx. 1,—7. || Matth. xii. 31, 32.; 1 John v. 16.

or longer time; reducing them to distress of soul, in various degrees, unto a despairing in themselves: Before being brought off from all ways of establishing their own righteousness, by a supernatural manifestation of the Surety-righteousness to their souls; in which they should find a sweet and satisfying rest. So it was with *Paul*, when under the work of the law on his conscience; as it brought him into a death of all the confidence and hope with which he had pleased himself in his unregenerate state*.—But others were to be dealt with in a more soft and summary manner; under a discovery to them of their danger and relief, as all at once. So it was with *Lydia*; whose heart the Lord opened at once, to attend unto the things which she heard spoken concerning Jesus Christ†.—The Lord deals most sovereignly in these cases. But the distresses and terrors with which some are previously exercised, have nothing good in their nature; though the Lord sovereignly measures out and orders them unto good: For these are never to be considered as any sort of atonement or amends to God for their sin; all this lying wholly in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

3dly, As there were to be great varieties, with regard to the internal secrecy or distinctness of the manner in which sinners were to be brought to Christ; so likewise, in the course of following dispensations toward them. Their gracious state was not designed for taking them out of their civil stations; every man wherein he is called, must therein abide with God†. And they were to have great diversities measured out to them, of providential favours and frowns; some to be signalized by heavy trials, wants and sufferings. But especially, they were to be variously distinguished as to their gracious state,—into *children*, young men, and *fathers*; some weak, some strong,—every one having

* Rom. vii. 9.

† Acts xvi. 14.

‡ 1 Cor. vii. 24.

having *grace given unto them, according to the measure of the gift of Christ* * : And thus, through many differences of attainment in gracious experiences and exercises, they were to be preserved and carried forward in their course toward the heavenly Canaan ; so as to be safely brought, at the end of their times, to a state of perfection in that everlasting rest.

All these matters were most particularly and unalterably settled, by promises to Christ concerning them ; promises of that Covenant which is *ordered in all things and sure* †.

§ IV. There were promises *peculiar* to Christ himself ; respecting his own person, in his estates of both humiliation and exaltation. According to these promises, the *Father* and *Spirit* were engaged to concur with him ; as to the qualifying and strengthening of his manhood, in his humbled estate : His human nature was not to *see corruption* in the grave, but soon to be gloriously raised up : He was to have a full acceptance, as having finished his Surety-work in his death ; *justified* from all the charges which had been laid against him, as made under the law : And he was to be exalted in a state of glorious dominion, as the Head of his Church, and over all things for his Church,—*appointed heir of all things* ; with an everlasting victory and triumph, in his glorified humanity, over all his enemies ‡.

But all these promises were made to him not properly for himself ; they were made to him in a public capacity, as the Covenant-head of his people,—all for their benefit, in and through him. As they were to be partakers of all his service and suffering, in his humiliation ; so they were to be partakers of his

* 1 John ii. 13. ; Eph. iv. 7. † 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

‡ Psal. lxxxix. 21. ; Isa. xi. 2. ; Psal. xvi. 10. ;

1 Tim. iii. 16. ; Eph. ii. 21, 22. ; Heb. i. 2. ; Psal. cx. 1.

his life in his resurrection and exaltation, of his victory and triumph, of his eternal glory in their nature as their Head.

§ V. All the promises of the New-Covenant were absolutely and immediately from the *mere grace*, the Sovereign good pleasure of God; of the *Godhead* in the person of the *Father*. The *fulfilling* of them was to proceed on Christ's undertaking and fulfilling the condition of that Covenant; but the *making* of them did no way proceed upon that ground. And all the promises *peculiar* to Christ, with all the promises which were made *to him* concerning his people,—were all subordinate and subservient to those which were made *to them* in him. The *divine glory* is the chief *end* of the New-Covenant salvation; but the *mediatory glory* belongs to the *means* of that salvation, according to the sovereignty of the grace of God: As hath been somewhat explained in the third section of this period.

S E C T. X.

Of the End of the Covenant of Grace.

§ I. THE only wise God, of whom and through whom and to whom are all things,—hath purposed all the means which he uses, toward ends most worthy of himself. His purposes of these means, and his intentions thereby, are all *one* in his infinite mind; but our finite minds are warranted to take up the same in distinguished considerations, according to the nature of the things. He purposed to create the world, for manifesting the glory of his eternal power and Godhead; as the infinite and self-existent Being, producing all the varieties of finite things out of nothing. He purposed to permit the fall of mankind
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in the first man, for manifesting the glory of his absolute sovereignty; and of absolute infallibility, as being his incommunicable prerogative. And all his purposes concerning fallen creatures, both angelic and human, were for the further manifestation of all his other glorious perfections.

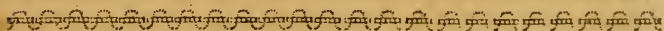
§ II. The *subordinate* end of the Covenant of Grace, is the everlasting salvation of all those who were chosen to be the objects of it. *The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious*, most freely purposed their salvation from sin and misery; unto a far higher state of holiness and happiness than that from which the first man fell, and than there was any prospect of according to the Covenant of Works. And, in his manifold wisdom, he provided for the effectuating of all that salvation; by the establishment of the Covenant of Grace. All the particular means thereof, outward and inward, meritorious and effective, special and common,—were provided and ordered in that Covenant; beyond all possibility of failure, as to either the means or the effect. And all things in the course of providence toward them, were settled into a state of subserviency to that subordinate end of the Covenant of Grace concerning them.

§ III. The *highest* end of the Covenant of Grace, is the glory of absolutely free grace in the salvation of its objects. All is *to the praise of the glory of his grace* *. Heaven was thus to be filled for ever, with the glory of free grace toward the redeemed from among men: And each of these was to be a wonder to himself through eternity, as to how he came to be there rather than in the deeps of hell; incapable of finding any reason for it but in the mere good pleasure

* Eph. i. 6.

sure of God,—that *so it seemed good in his sight*, that “God would have it so.”

At the same time, this glory of the *grace* of God was to be amazingly heightened; by having all its effect in a manner infinitely glorifying to the *justice* of God: As divine justice, in pleading the cause of God against sin, could never come to a full effect in hell; but was to do so in the cross of Christ, with regard to all the sins of the redeemed. These must therefore have to adore the free grace of God, in looking up for ever to the glorious Redeemer upon his throne; saying,—*thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by blood* *.



P E R I O D II.

Of the Accomplishment of the Covenant of Grace in Time.

THIS Covenant, which had an establishment from *eternity*, was to have an accomplishment in *time*; when God had created the world in which that great work was to be performed. And it was begun very early, in the garden where the first sin was committed; immediately upon the breach of the Covenant of Works by that sin. A revelation was then made of the Covenant of Grace to our first parents; in the promise of Christ, as the redeeming *seed of the woman* †. And this revelation appears to have been made with gracious efficacy upon these first sinners. The woman, who was first in the transgression, had enmity put between the serpent and

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her;

* Rev. v. 9. † Gen. iii. 15.

her; which may be considered as a gracious enmity on her part against him.—Moreover, the first visible death in the world was that of beasts; with whose skins God clothed Adam and his wife. It is not to be supposed, that the beasts were slain for meat to them; when God had already signified, that herbs and trees should be to the man for meat,—and that in the sweat of his face he should eat bread: Or that these beasts were slain for being made no use of at all, farther than to have our first parents clothed with their skins. But we may suppose that they were instructed (as *Abel* afterwards) to offer these beasts in sacrifice, as typical of the sacrifice of Christ the promised seed; depending upon this as the atonement for their sin: With a respect to which, he is called *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world* *.

The gradual accomplishment of the Covenant of Grace was the same, as to the *matter* of it, under the *Old* as under the *New Testament*: But under the *Old*, it was in a very different *manner*. It is not proposed here to enter into any consideration of that difference; but to explain this accomplishment in the general state of it, and as continued in the Churches of the New Testament.—Only it may be observed, concerning Christ's fulfilling the condition of the Covenant by his obedience unto death; that though this was, for many ages, a matter of futurity to men,—it was not so to God, to whom all things are and have been always present. He is not therefore to be considered, in a proper sense, as having then fulfilled promises “upon the credit of” Christ's fulfilling the condition in due time;” or as “taking Christ's single bond for sufficient security:” Because the fulfilled condition was all along present to God; as it was then made present to the faith of worshippers, in the typical sacrifices. The death

* Rev. xiii. 8.

death of Christ, as the great Antitype of these sacrifices, was then a *matter of fact* in divine reckoning*.

The accomplishment of the Covenant of Grace may be considered under two general HEADS; the *mediatory* and *ministerial* accomplishment of it. The whole accomplishment is indeed mediatory, in a full sense of the word; as it is all by and from the Mediator, in the course of his mediatory administration,—for *the Father hath given all things into his hand*†. But the *mediatory* accomplishment is here understood, as denoting his *immediate* administration upon earth and in heaven; with his work on earth, by his Spirit, through the means of grace,—in dealing with the souls of men: Which bears a peculiar respect to the *Elect*. And the *ministerial* accomplishment is understood of this spiritual work, as carried on through a standing ministry; which bears a common respect to *Church-members*.

HEAD I.

Of the mediatory Accomplishment of the Covenant of Grace.

THIS is all comprehended in that administration and work of Christ which has been mentioned, according to his three mediatory offices; as a *Prophet*, a *Priest*, and a *King*.—The exercise of his *priestly* office, lies at the foundation of his exercise of the other two: And though his first dealing with sinners is as a *Prophet*, yet their first dealing with him is as a *Priest*; what he doth *in them* as a Prophet, leading to a dependence on what he hath done *for them* as a Priest. His exercise of this office is therefore to be first considered, in the present case.

S E C T.

* Isa. liii. 7, 8. 10. 12.

† John iii. 35.

S E C T. I.

Of the Accomplishment of the Covenant of Grace by Christ as a Priest.

THE truth of the *Priesthood* of Jesus Christ, is the great subject of the Epistle to the Hebrews; where it is most expressly and very fully taught. In his *priestly* office, he is the great Antitype of the priests and high-priests under the law; they were shadows, in this whole matter, of which he is the substance. The sacrifices which they offered, and the prayers which they made for the people, typified his sacrifice and intercession. They were to be without blemish in their bodies, typifying his personal perfection. And they were to be *holy*,—the high-priest having this inscription upon his mitre, *Holiness to the Lord*; as typical of his personal and practical holiness. Of all these types, he is the truth.—But his priesthood is far more extensive, than to be merely answerable to those representations which had been made of him by the legal priests.

They could not be priests without being men; this was to be supposed unto their office, yet was no part of their *official character*: But his becoming man, his taking the *body* or human nature *prepared* for him*, belonged to his *official character*; his assumption thereof was the first and fundamental step of his officiating as an High-priest. *Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same*: And this assumption was in order to *destroy him that had the power of death*: Which he was to do *through death*, in the exercise of his priesthood.—The legal priests had to offer sacrifices for their own sins, as well as for the

* Heb. x. 5.

the sins of the people: But he had no such thing ado, being absolutely *without sin* *. And though their *sacrifices* were typically substituted into the place of the people, yet they *themselves* were not so: But he was really so, seeing his sacrifice was to be the sacrifice of *himself*.

Moreover, though the priests under the law were to offer sacrifices for the sins of the people; yet they had not to *obey*, or perform righteousness for them, in their name and place: But this our great High-priest had to do; as substituted into the place of his people, under the law,—according to the whole extent of its precepts as well as penalty. Divine justice could not have admitted of him as a surety, for paying the debt of *punishment*, in the more direct exercise of his priesthood; without his paying the debt of *obedience* likewise: As no payment of this debt could have been accepted of from him, without that of punishment also. He had to fulfil the Covenant of Works for his people, as well as to satisfy for their breach of it. The law was to be *wholly*, or *noway* magnified and made honourable by him; he was to be qualified for suffering the penalty of it in the place of his people, by fulfilling the righteousness of it for them: He could not come forward to the last step of his righteous obedience, in laying down his life under the penalty,—but through all the previous steps of that surety-righteousness.

The exercise of his *priesthood* is therefore as extensive as his suretiship; it comprehends his whole fulfilling of the condition of the Covenant of Grace: It takes in the several articles of his *incarnation*, *service*, *suffering*, entrance into his *glory*, and continual *intercession*.

ART.

* Heb. iv. 15.

ART. I. *Of the Incarnation of JESUS CHRIST.*

§ I. The eternal Son of God did become incarnate : *And, without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness ; especially in this leading article of it, God manifested in the flesh ** : God, in the person of the eternal Son, *was made flesh †*. He assumed manhood into an indissoluble and everlasting union with his divine Person.—God very wonderfully united himself to the *ark*, in the ancient tabernacle and temple ; he dwelt in it, he was most singularly present in and with it : So that Jordan fled back on its approach ; the walls of Jericho fell down before it, as did Dagon in his temple ; and a disrespectful looking into it, brought a terrible destruction upon the men of Beth-shemesh. But this symbolical and temporary union of God to that ark, was only a faint type of the greatest of all God's wonders ; the real and permanent union of the eternal Son to human nature : An union of the divine and human natures, without any conversion of the one into the other ; and without any composition or confusion of these natures. There is nothing more unquestionable in the holy Scriptures, than the *fact* of this incarnation ; yet, as the *mystery* of it is incomprehensible by finite minds, an attempt to explain it would be both vain and impious. Who can even explain the union of his own soul and body ?

But this must be considered as a *personal union* of the infinite and finite natures. The Son of God assumed a true body and a reasonable soul ; which is all that constitutes a person in us. But it was not a human person that he thus assumed ; for his humanity never existed or acted by itself in any separate state, or otherwise than as subsisting in his divine person

* 1 Tim. iii. 16. † John i. 4.

Person. His two distinct natures make but *one person*; as but one person, *God-man*, he always acted and spoke of himself *.

§ II. This incarnation of the eternal Son was absolutely necessary, for his fulfilling the condition of the Covenant of Grace.—He had engaged to be a sacrificing High-priest, *ordained for men*; and he could not be so, but as *taken from among men* †,—in his becoming a man. He had engaged to *put away sin by the sacrifice of himself* ‡; and this he could not do, but as having a human nature in which to be sacrificed. And he had engaged to offer this sacrifice, as becoming *obedient unto death* ||; which he could not be, but as having a human nature in which to obey. Such was the indispensable necessity which had been most graciously laid upon him, and acquiesced in by him, from all eternity; to become one of the people, the *Son of man*: His *delights with the sons of men*, engaging him to become their Kinsman-redeemer.

§ III. The incarnation of the eternal Son, was according to what had been foreshown of him under the Old-Testament state. He had several times made himself visible, in the appearance of a man; as a prelude to his assuming the reality of manhood in due time. He had been prophetically set forth as a *child born unto us, a son given unto us*; when, at the same time, *the mighty God* §. The continuance of the Jewish state had been secured against all enemies, till the accomplishment of the promise; *Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name IMMANUEL,—God with us* **. And the sword

* Part I. Chap. II. Sect. I. § I. 3dly. † Heb. v. 1.
 ‡ Heb. ix. 26. || Phil. ii. 8. § Isa. ix. 6. ** Isa. vii. 14.

sword of justice was to awake against him in due time ; against him as *the man*, the LORD's Fellow *.

§ IV. This incarnation was verified in the very time which had been set for it, and the very fittest time: *When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law ; to redeem them that were under the law †.* This was the great event of which an angel gave assurance to his virgin-mother: *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee ; therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God ‡.* Such is the account which God is giving to us, concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord ; which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power ||. He accordingly bears this standing character, *the man Christ Jesus* : He is as truly man as he is God, *God-man* ; in two distinct natures and one person for ever.

§ V. The human nature was assumed by him, in a state of perfect holiness: *For such an High-priest became us ; who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners §.* His human nature descended from the first man, not by ordinary but extraordinary generation ; wherefore it had no concern in the first man's covenant-headship, and could be under no natural imputation of the guilt of his first sin. For the same reason, his human nature derived no corruption from the first man ; it was absolutely holy, in the conception thereof.—And this original holiness of Jesus Christ, as to the state of his person in manhood, was of a public nature ; it belonged to him in a public capacity, as a covenant-head : For he did not, he could

* Zech. xiii. 7.

† Gal. iv. 4. 5.

‡ Luke i. 35.

§ Rom. i. 3. 4.

§ Heb. vii. 26.

could not bear any private character in his incarnation. He therefore presented his holy human nature to the law of the Covenant of Works, in the name and place of his people; as a full answer to the demand which that law had upon them, for holiness of *nature* as well as of *life*. A fulfilling of the righteousness of that law, in active obedience, could only proceed from a perfect holiness of nature: And his engagement to fulfil that righteousness for his people, could be admitted of,—only upon his stating himself in their name and place, as of a perfect personal conformity to the law in their nature.

ART. II. *Of the Service of Jesus Christ.*

§ I. Jesus Christ was *made under the law* *; according to that form of it as a Covenant of Works, in which all men are naturally subjected to its absolute dominion: But he was made so, by a gracious and supernatural constitution. He was, in a most distinguished sense, the Father's *servant* under that law; and the Father acknowledged him to be, in a supereminent manner, his *righteous Servant* †. He had to say to the Father, in the fullest sense of the words,—*I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy law is within my heart* ‡: And this perfect holiness of his nature, did issue in a perfect holiness of life. He lived in a private manner, about thirty years; and then about three years and an half in a public ministry: During all which time, he was *harmless and undefiled*; he *did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth* ||. On the contrary, he had this true and noble account to give of himself,—*My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work; I do always those things that please him*: And he desired his most malicious enemies, to *convince him of sin* §.

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* Gal. iv. 4. † Isa. xlii. 1.; lii. 13.; liii. 11. ‡ Psal. xl. 8.

|| 1 Pet. ii. 22. § John iv. 34; viii. 29, 46.

He never offended in one point, by way of commission or omission, through all his course.

This *man*, whose name is *Wonderful*, is the only man who ever spent a life on earth in a perfect conformity to the law; which he did, from his being not a *mere man*. And he made most striking displays of his *Godhead*, amidst all the meanness of his appearance in going through his service; by the doctrines which he taught, as well as by the many miracles which he wrought. The generality of those among whom he then conversed had no apprehension, and his disciples had but a very faint apprehension, of who he really was: Yet he was all along the same person that he afterwards appeared to be. There would have been nothing beyond the truth, when pointing him out through the course of his humiliation and on the cross, had it been then said; *THERE is God in our nature!*—*One who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: All things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist* *. What a wonderful Person, come down into a most abased state of service and suffering! At the very time when he *hid not his face from shame and spitting*, he had to say; *at my rebuke I dry up the sea, I make the rivers a wilderness; I clothe the heavens with blackness, and I make sackcloth their covering* †.

§ II. The service performed by Jesus Christ under the law, is of a *public* nature: It was performed by him as a Surety-priest for his people; as the Head of the New Covenant. Having taken their *nature* into his own person, he had their *name* put upon him;

* Col. i. 15, 16, 17.

† Isa. l. 2, 3, 6.

him ; stating him in their place, with regard to that service : For the Father said to him, *Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified* *. He was engaged by the Covenant of Grace to repair the breach of the Covenant of Works, in the name and place of his people ; to fulfil all the righteousness of it for them, as their new ground of title to eternal life. He was accordingly sent, *to bring in everlasting righteousness* † ; by a complete service in their stead, under the law of that Covenant : To work out this righteousness for being made *theirs*, in a free gift of it unto them ‡. And, by that service, he actually became *the end of the law for righteousness ; to every one that believeth* ||. The righteousness of his life, is that *robe of righteousness* with which they are covered in their justification §.

It is not merely the sufferings, the death, the blood of Christ,—that a guilty sinner must depend upon, for justification before God. This *satisfactory* exercise of his priesthood is the ground of deliverance from the *penalty* or curse of the law ; the ground of pardon as to all bypast breaches of it, original and actual. But this alone would leave the sinner still under the law of the Covenant of Works, for the time to come ; and new breaches of it would bring him again into condemnation, making him liable as formerly to eternal death.—It is therefore necessary likewise, that the person have a righteousness of *full and final* conformity to the *preceptive* part of the Covenant of Works ; upon which he may be delivered from all subjection to that law as a Covenant, for the time to come : Never to have any more concern with it as a Covenant-law ; requiring perfect obedience for life, and cursing for every disobedience. Such a righteousness the person must

* Isa. xlix. 3.
Rom. v. 17.

† Dan. ix. 24.
|| Rom. x. 4.

‡ Isa. liv. 17 ;
§ If. lxi. 10.

must have, meritorious of eternal glory; and of grace, for enabling him to live in an acceptable conformity to the law as a rule of life. And this is the righteousness of Christ's complete service, under the law of the Covenant of Works. As by the *satisfactory* righteousness in the *death* of Christ, we obtain deliverance from condemnation to eternal death in hell; so, by the *meritorious* righteousness in the *life* of Christ, we obtain a title to eternal life in heaven: And all this is but one indivisible righteousness; to be depended upon for one indivisible salvation, from hell to heaven.

§ III. The service performed by Jesus Christ under the law, was *wholly* of a *public* nature; wholly for his people, no way for himself.

It has been said,—that “the human nature of Christ, being a creature, owed obedience to God in virtue of its creation:” That “obedience to the natural law was due by the man Christ, by a natural tie:” That “Christ was indeed a creature, but holy; under the Covenant of Works for himself:” And “that Christ is under the law, as a rule of holiness, for ever.”

However good and great the men were who have stumbled into this doctrine, from not examining the real import and necessary consequences of it; yet the doctrine itself is quite insufferable.—No doubt, a *human person* owes obedience to God in virtue of its creation; obedience to the natural law is incumbent upon every human person, by a natural tie. But the *human nature* of Christ was not a *person*; it had never any distinct existence as a rational agent; it never could have any agency, but as subsisting in the person of the eternal Son. A *human nature*, not constituting a *person*, was an object altogether *supernatural*; and could not be an object
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of any *natural* tie, according to any principle of either reason or revelation. The man Christ, the person *God-man*, was graciously constituted an object of the moral law; but his *human nature* could not be so: For it was not, in and by itself, a moral agent; it had no capacity, distinct from the person of the eternal Son, of either obligation or obedience. The law's natural claim is necessarily confined to human persons, who alone are its natural objects, justifying or condemning of a *human nature*, which is not a personal agent, and so not an object of legal claim,—is even a matter of gross absurdity.

Moreover, if Christ obeyed the law in a *private* character, as under the Covenant of Works for *himself*; then his active obedience must have been either *wholly*, or but *partly* of that nature. If *wholly* so, if he fulfilled the righteousness of the law only for himself; then the doctrine of his Surety-righteousness for his people, in the course of his active obedience, comes to be abolished.—If it be said, that his obeying of the law was but *partly* for himself, then a march ought to be fixed between his *private* and *public* obedience; which yet is impossible. If he had *any* obedience to yield for himself, he must have had *all* his obedience to yield for himself; because the law of the Covenant of Works, if it had any such claim upon him, could claim nothing short of *perfection*. And so still, the doctrine of his Surety-righteousness, in his active obedience, comes to be quite abolished; that obedience which he yielded would be excluded from all concern in the ground of our justification.

And the consequence goes still deeper. For, if Christ owed perfect obedience for himself; then all his holy submission to providential dispensations concerning him,—to sorrows and griefs, trials, sufferings and death; all this must have belonged to his perfect

perfect obedience for himself, for it could not otherwise have been perfect: And so, nothing would be left for us but mere *example*,—in both the life and death of Christ; no ground at all for our justification, and consequently no salvation.

It is likewise a shocking tenet,—that “Christ is “under the law, as a rule of holiness, for ever.” His *human nature*, as such, was never under it; either as a Covenant-law, or as a rule of holiness. His person, *God-man* was under it for his people, as a Covenant-law; which he ceased to be in his death: And seeing his *person*, in his exalted state, is infinitely high above all law; it is most absurd to represent his *human nature*, in that state, as under any law,—while that nature, as such, could *never* be under any.

The sum of all is,—That Christ performed a service under the law, *no way* in a *private*, but *wholly in a public* character; *no way for himself*, but *wholly for his people*: And so his whole righteousness, in that service, belongs to the ground of their justification.—The doctrine here taught, as it is certainly true, is of the greatest importance to the honour of Christ and the faith of Christians; so that one cannot well maintain it in too firm a tone.

ART. III. *Of the Sufferings of Jesus Christ.*

§. I. The exercise of Christ's priesthood, though comprehending his *service*, did lie peculiarly in his *sufferings*: For, in this *satisfactory* exercise of it, he was most directly the Antitype of the sacrificing priests and sacrifices under the law.

It is also to be considered,—that the *satisfactory* exercise of his priesthood was previous and fundamental, in the order of nature, to the *meritorious* exercise of it. For the blessings of life could not be bestowed upon his people as *curled*, or as judicially
dead

dead under the curse of the law: The purchase of these blessings for them by his *service*, did therefore suppose a relief for them from the sentence of the law-curse, by his *sufferings*; that they might be saved from sin, as saved from wrath. At the same time, his *meritorious* service must be considered as running through all his *satisfactory* sufferings; though these be distinct, they cannot be divided. For his sufferings could not be satisfactory as merely *penal*, or without being likewise *obediential*; and he *became obedient unto death* *: So that all his *penal* sufferings, considered as obediential, did belong to his *meritorious* service.

§ II. The *sufferings* of Christ were most just, as they were for *sins*. He was, in himself, without sin: But he *hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust* †. He had all the sins of all his people made *his* sins, by imputation. They have therefore to say concerning him, *His ownself bare our sins in his own body on the tree: The LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all: Surely he hath born our griefs and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities*:—All this they have to say concerning him; as the LORD hath said, *For the transgression of my people was he stricken* ‡. They have likewise to say,—*He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him* ||: We are made perfectly righteous before God in him, by the imputation of his righteousness to us; from his having been made perfectly sinful for us, by the imputation of our sin to him.

He could not suffer *for them*, in their place,—but as suffering *for their sins*, on that account. All their
sins

* Phil. ii. 8.

† 1 Pet. iii. 18.

‡ 1 Pet. ii. 24.;

Isa. liii. 4, 5, 6, 8.

|| 2 Cor. v. 21.

sins were judicially imputed to him in respect of *guilt*; or of punishableness for the same: He was charged with all their guilt, unto a suffering of all the wrath and curse of God due to them for sin; as he stood in their nature, and in their place, under the law. —It doth not consist with common sense, to speak of *imputing* the *punishment* of their sin to him: For punishment cannot be a matter of imputation, it is only a matter of infliction; and it must suppose guiltiness. But all their sin, as to guiltiness or desert of punishment, was really imputed to him; so that this was the true and just reason of all his sufferings.

§ III. The *sufferings* of Christ did run through all his *service*; all the course of his life in this world.—He suffered at his birth *in a manger*, there being *no room for him in the inn*. He had to be soon carried away by flight, from the cruelty of Herod seeking his life. He was tempted by the devil, through a fast of forty days in the wilderness.—He was all along *a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; despised and rejected of men*. And it was a matter of unparalleled suffering,—for such a wonderful Person to live among men on earth, in the form of a servant.

But his sufferings came to their greatest height, at the close of his ministry.—He suffered in the garden, the night before his death: As he there *began to be amazed, and to be very heavy*; saying,—*My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death: And being in agony—his sweat was as it were great drops of blood, falling down to the ground*. After being apprehended in the garden, he was brought into the high-priest's house; where the men that held him *mocked him, and smote him: And when they had blindfolded him, they struck him on the face: Some did spit in his face, and buffeted him; and others smote him with the palms*

palms of their hands. He was then brought to stand as a criminal, before a heathen judge; when he further endured most cruel *mockings*: He was *scourged*, had a *crown of thorns put upon his head*, was *spit upon*, *smitten on the head*; and *crucified*, betwixt two malefactors.—This extraordinary course of suffering by such an extraordinary Person, is set forth at large in the books of the Evangelists; and such as are ordinarily acquainted with these, will need no particular references.

§ IV. It was necessary that the sufferings of Christ should be unto *death*. This was the penalty of the broken law, under which he was made. From the infallibility of the glorious Undertaker, the Covenant of Grace could have no penalty *annexed* to it in case of failure: But the penalty annexed to the Covenant of Works was *engrossed* in the Covenant of Grace; to be executed upon Christ, as an essential part of the condition of this Covenant. And that penalty he had to undergo in all its extent, as to the *matter* of the thing. Spiritual death, which is sin as well as punishment, was not competent to him: And any effect of the penalty, in that point, was fully anticipated by the perfect holiness of his human nature. Bodily death was competent to him, and undergone by him; in dissolving the union betwixt his human soul and body, though not betwixt his human and divine natures. That eternal death, which all mankind are naturally subjected unto, derives its eternity from their finite natures; as the curse of the law can never have a finished effect upon them: But it got a full effect upon Christ in his death, from his infinite capacity for bearing it; that curse was exhausted upon him, so that he got through it on the cross.

And his obedience could not be finished, but as it

came to issue in his submitting to all the death which could be inflicted upon him according to the law-curse. Without this, all his previous obedience must have gone for nothing; as to any saving benefit for sinners. He said,—*Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit;—and I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me**: By which he intimated the absolute necessity of his death, as lifted up on the cross; in order to his having a spiritual seed of a saved people, among sinners of all sorts. His obedience as unto death, and only as brought to this issue, was to be a sufficient ground for the deliverance of his people from condemnation; and meritorious of grace for their sanctification, unto eternal life.

§ V. The sufferings of Christ were carried to the uttermost *extremity* of distressful pain; infinitely beyond that of any other sufferings in this world, and even of any that can take place in hell through all eternity.—Such of them as were inflicted on his body by Jews and Romans, under the influence of Satan, were singularly great; yet by far the smallest part of his sufferings. These did principally consist in the agonies of his soul: When he began to be amazed and exceeding sorrowful, in a profuse and bloody sweat; representing in most earnest prayer, once and again, and a third time, the sinless horror of his human nature—at the cup which the Father had given him to drink. All the waves and billows of divine vengeance were then going over him, and fully penetrated his soul: He then drank out the whole contents of that cup of wrath which was put into his hand. The painful effect which the law-curse had then upon Christ, is no way imaginary; it

* John xii. 24, 32.

it was infinitely more real than the torments of wicked men and devils in hell : Because that effect was infinitely complete on him, but never can be so on them. There is indeed an overwhelming mystery in this case : That the only begotten and beloved Son of God, still continuing such, could have suffered in this manner ; that he could, in his humanity, have undergone the fullest efficacy of God's wrath and curse. But such was really the case ; nothing was abated to him, of the punishment which all the sins of his people deserved : He was *made a curse* for them, most cursed in their place ; and *it pleased the LORD to bruise him, he hath put him to grief* *. He was made to cry out upon the cross,—*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me* † ? Such was the efficacy and sense of divine wrath in his soul, that he had to say,—*I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint ; my heart is like wax, it is melted in the midst of my bowels* ‡. Here indeed was the highest display of the infinite evil, the exceeding sinfulness of sin : and of the most dreadful but necessary claims of divine justice on every sinner ! The most realizing apprehensions of hell can give no such view of this matter, as is to be had in meditation upon the cross of Christ.

§ VI. The sufferings of Christ were of an *official* nature ; so that, through the whole of them, he proceeded with gracious *activity*. He indeed appeared to be *passive*, in what he suffered from the wicked hands of his enemies ; but he was so, no otherwise than as he was pleased to give himself over to their will. He was under no necessity from them, for doing so : He could have delivered himself from them, even in their utter destruction, by a powerful word

* Gal. iii. 13. ; Psal. liii. 10.

† Matth. xxvii. 46.

‡ Psal. xxii. 14.

word. Nothing could be said in more simple and mild terms, than the account which he gave to those who came for apprehending him,—that he was the person whom they fought: But his word was with such power, that *they immediately went backward, and fell to the ground* *. Nor could they have risen up, nor could any thing that followed have been got done against him; had he not been pleased to make no farther resistance, than in giving such a striking evidence of what he could do. His own power was sufficient for crushing all his enemies at once: And he likewise had *legions of angels* at his command †.

But, as he had been exercising his priesthood through all the course of his sufferings; he was then come forward to his principal work in that office: He had *appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself* ‡; which he did, in a voluntary laying down of his life. It was of necessity, that this great High-priest should have somewhat to offer: And no other *offering* could suit either his dignity or design, but that of *himself*; he *hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet smelling savour* ||. And this official work he carried on, till he actively *gave up the ghost*: When he had said, *It is finished* §; the whole effect of the law-curse on him was finished, and the whole of his work on earth as a sacrificing High-priest.

§ VII. The sufferings of Christ were of a *propitiatory* nature. He therein became *the propitiation for our sins*; officiating as our High-priest, in offering *himself without spot to God*: And he thus made a perfect atonement for all the sins of all his people; *putting away all their sin by the sacrifice of himself* **. This

* John xviii. 6.

† Matth. xxvi. 53.

‡ Heb. ix. 26.

|| Eph. v. 2.

§ John xix. 30.

** 1 John ii. 2.;

Heb. ix. 14, 26.

This one sacrifice was so perfect, that there was no room for repeating it; and so, *He thereupon for ever sat down on the right hand of God* *. In this manner, he accomplished the whole design upon which he had been sent into an estate of humiliation: *To finish the transgression and to make an end of sins*, as to all the guilt thereof which he found his people lying under; *and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness* †. His people have therefore to say,—*Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us: And this is the name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS* ‡.

That exercise of the priesthood of Christ which has now been considered, was a full accomplishment of his undertaking; as to the *whole condition* of the Covenant of Grace, infinitely satisfactory and meritorious: Most justly then he said to the Father, with regard to both his *service and suffering*; *I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do* ||. And as this was the most wonderful of all events in our world, it was solemnized in a more wonderful manner than any other,—During the time that Jesus was on the cross, *there was darkness over all the land*; the original properly signifies, *over all the earth*: A darkness beginning at mid-day, and continuing for three hours; when there could be no natural eclipse of the sun. *And behold, the vail of temple was rent in twain, from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent: And the graves were opened; and many bodies of saints, which slept, rose.*—These were unexampled and striking miracles in the world of nature; but all as nothing to the infinitely greater miracle,
of

* Heb. x. 12.

† Dan. ix. 24.

‡ Gal. iii. 13.

Heb. ix. 12.; Jer. xxiii. 6.

|| John xvii. 4.

of *God-man* then dying on the cross: And laying a sure foundation in his own death, upon which the matter of the angelic song at his birth was to have a full and everlasting effect; *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace; good will towards men!*

ART. IV. *Of the Entrance of Jesus Christ into his Glory.*

§ I. At an interview which Jesus had on his resurrection-day with two of his disciples, whom he found conversing in much despondency about his sufferings; he said,—*Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory *?* A necessity of these sufferings had been most graciously laid upon him, and most graciously submitted unto by him, in the establishment of the Covenant of Grace. And there was a necessity of his thereupon *entering into his glory*. It was necessary from the Father's engagement to him in that Covenant, not only for countenancing him in the course of his serving and suffering work; but also for accepting of him, upon its being finished. And in this acceptance of him, there was to be a glorifying of him in human nature; advancing it to a participation of that glory, in his person, which he, as the *eternal Son*, had with the Father *before the world was* †: And in this, all the promises of the Covenant, on behalf of his people, were to have a primary accomplishment on himself.

Moreover,—he assumed human nature, so as it could never be laid aside from a subsistence in his person. He therein *made himself of no reputation*; but this could only be for a time. Upon finishing the work of his humbled state in that nature,—it was absolutely necessary, from the divinity of his person,

* Luke xxiv. 26.

† John xvii. 5.

person, that the glory of his Godhead should shine forth in its full lustre through his manhood; that he should carry it up in his person to the throne of glory above all heavens.

§ II. His entering into his glory began in his *Resurrection* from the dead.—His enemies knew, that he had promised to rise again on the third day: They were positive, that he could not do so: But they supposed that his disciples might attempt to carry away his body from the sepulchre, and give out that he had risen. Against this, they took what they reckoned a most effectual precaution: A great stone having been rolled to the door of the sepulchre, they went and made it sure; sealing the stone, and setting a watch.

But early on the third day, *there was a great earthquake; and the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it: His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: And for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men**. Then Jesus arose, and came out of the sepulchre; divesting himself of his grave clothes, and laying them properly aside,—as none could imagine to have been done by his disciples.

God the Father took a *judicial* part in his resurrection; determining that he should be set at liberty: *Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death; because it was not possible* (from his having made full payment of the debt for which he had become Surety) *that he should be holden of it†*. God the Spirit took an *efficacious* part in his resurrection; making upon him, the primary accomplishment of the promises on behalf of his mystical body: And so he was declared to be the Son of God with power, according

* Matth. xxvii. 2; 3, 4.

† Acts ii. 24.

according to the Spirit of Holiness; by the resurrection from the dead *.—But, as he had power to lay down his life, he had *power to take it again*: And this power he had gloriously exercised; as he actively *rose again the third day according to the Scriptures* †.

§ III. His entering into his glory was completed, by his *ascending up on high* ‡. This he did, when he had continued forty days on earth after his resurrection; holding various interviews with his disciples: He was then *taken up, he went up; he ascended up far above all heavens*. Human nature, which had sunk so amazingly low in sinful men on earth,—was then seated, in his person, *on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens* ||.

And what a glorious welcome did he meet with in that nature, from God the Father; with all the angels and redeemed in heaven! Then was verified this high matter of triumph; *God is gone up with a shout, the LORD with the sound of a trumpet* §! Then, in the highest sense of the words, were the *everlasting doors* cast open, that the *King of Glory* might *come in* **!—There were human eyes then in heaven; at least, of *Enoch* and *Elias*: Nor are we to suppose, that there had been only a phantom of *Moses* on the mount of transfiguration; or that, as raised up, he returned from thence to the grave,—instead of having his body as well as his soul taken up to heaven: Along also with the resurrection of Christ, *many bodies of saints which slept arose* ††; who were certainly taken up to heaven. And with what joyful transport were all these eyes then fixed on the greatest of all wonders, the glorified *God-man*; beholding in him the whole meritorious reason of their
own

* Rom. i. 4.

† John x. 18.; 1 Cor. xv. 4.

‡ Eph. iv. 8, 10.

|| Heb. viii. 1. § Psal. xlvii. 5, 6.

** Psal. xxiv. 7, 10.

†† Matth. xxvii. 52, 53.

own heavenly state,—of their not being sunk into hell! How must the mutual excitement have then resounded in heaven; *Sing praises to God, sing praises,—sing praises to our King, sing praises!*

§ IV. The entering of Jesus Christ into his glory, did partly belong to the exercise of his *kingly office*; as he then went *to receive for himself a kingdom* *.—He had exercised this office in the course of his humbled estate; by various acts of authority with power; by casting out devils, and working other miracles. He triumphed as a victorious King over the god of this world, in his fast of forty days. He so triumphed more eminently, over the principalities and powers of hell, on his cross; amidst all their apparent triumph over him †. *Through death, he destroyed him that had the power of death* ‡; in respect of all rightful dominion over those for whom he died. In his resurrection, he so triumphed over death and the grave: As he said,—*O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction* ||. During forty days that he continued on earth after his resurrection, he was in a state of royal and unmolested triumph over Satan; upon the territory which that wicked tempter had claimed as his own, in the fast of forty days. And when he *ascended on high*, he *led captivity captive* §: Not only a multitude of captives, his enemies of earth and hell; but even the *captivity* of his people, as wonderfully bringing it into the service of his grace and glory.—He thus entered into his glory, as a triumphing Conqueror; with all the state and majesty which belonged to him as the King of Glory.

§ V. The entering of Jesus Christ into his glory,
C c did

* Luke xix. 12.

† Col. ii. 15.

‡ Heb. ii. 14.

|| Hos. xiii. 14.

§ Psal. lxviii. 18.

did peculiarly belong to the exercise of his *priestly office*. His resurrection belonged to it; somehow as the light of the sun belongs to the sun itself. According to the Scripture-testimony,—as he *was delivered for our offences*, he *was raised again for our justification* *. But his resurrection is no part of his justifying righteousness; it no way belongs to the ground of our justification. Yet the *evidence* of the truth and sufficiency of that satisfaction and righteousness which he finished upon the cross, lies in his having been raised again.

The truth of his resurrection is established by *many infallible proofs* †. It was so, to the infallible knowledge of his disciples; and it is so, by their infallible testimony. It was so, by the most miraculous powers with which his Apostles were endued by him as become alive for evermore: And it has all along been so, by many wonderful evidences of his glorious life; in the singular triumphs of the Gospel, and that building of his Church against which the gates of hell have never been able to prevail.

And the greatest stress is laid upon the truth of his resurrection, as to the faith of Christians concerning the efficacy of his death. This testimony is still given to them,—*If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain; and your faith is also vain: If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins* ‡. He was therefore raised, he rose again,—unto a full and standing demonstration, of his having really finished his satisfactory and meritorious work upon the cross; of his having really *put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*. And our dependence upon him for justification, as having died for our sins, must arise from the evidence of his having really and sufficiently done so; as this lies in his resurrection.

And he ascended up on high, as our great High-priest;

* Rom. iv. 25.

† Acts i. 3.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 14, 17.

priest; the Antitype of the high-priests under the law. He carried his own blood (as to the virtue thereof) into the heavenly sanctuary, for a continual presenting of it before the throne: When he likewise presented all the spiritual Israel to his Father, as upon his heart; and as if having the names of them all most individually on a breast-plate.—He thus entered into his glory, by a combined exercise of his priestly and kingly offices, to sit for ever *a Priest upon his throne.*

ART. V. *Of the Intercession of Jesus Christ.*

§ I. The particular *truth* of Christ's *Intercession*, is comprehended in the general truth of his *Priesthood*.—In this, as well as in his sacrificing work, he was the Antitype of the legal priests. It certainly belonged to them, as it did to the prophet *Samuel*, when occasionally offering a sacrifice on behalf of the people, to *pray for them unto the LORD* * : And the high-priest went alone once every year into the holiest of all, *not without blood, which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people* †; thereby making intercession for himself and them. In all this, they were typical of Christ as an interceding High-priest; officiating for his people in that character, without any need of doing so for himself.

When God had finished his work, of creating and forming this world, in the space of six days; *he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made* : He ceased from creating any new sorts of finite being. But he has, all along, been most attentive unto, and most particularly employed about the world which he made; it has never been a moment out of his eye, or out of his hand: He is continually preserving and governing all his creatures, and all
their

* 1 Sam. vii. 5, 8, 9.

† Heb. ix. 7.

their actions.—In like manner, Jesus Christ has *ceased* from the work of his humbled estate; he *is entered into his rest**, as having finished his conditional part of the New Covenant: He had nothing more of that sort to do; his work of service and suffering could not admit of either alteration or addition. But he is continually employed about that finished work, in the way of intercession: He has it in his eye and on his heart; most intent and careful, without ever forgetting or neglecting it, to have the whole design thereof effectuated in due time. The present view is particularly adapted to the present state of matters: Yet nothing said is meant to exclude the truth of his intercession more than of his having been the Mediator of the New-Covenant, under the legal dispensation. His service and sufferings, upon which his intercession proceeds, were then a matter of futurity to men; but they were not so to him in his divine character, in which nothing was ever to him either past or future. It was therefore competent to him, before being manifested in flesh,—to make that *intercession* for Jerusalem, in which he was answered with *good words and comfortable words*†.

By his death, the Covenant of Grace was turned into a *testamentary* deed: It became *the New Testament in his blood*. His death was the death of the *Testator*‡, therein bequeathing to his people the most inestimable legacies; a pleadable interest in all his service and sufferings, for their salvation: Bequeathing to them even himself, in his everlasting righteousness and fulness of grace; with all the blessed consequences thereof, unto eternal life. He accordingly said, and still saith unto his disciples; *peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you*||. All the members of the visible Church, sinners of mankind as
such,

* Heb. iv. 10. † Zech. i. 12, 13. ‡ Heb. ix. 15, 16, 17:
|| John xiv. 27.

such, are the direct and immediate objects of the free offers and calls in the gospel: But his *testamentary will* ought not to be confounded with these gracious offers and calls, which belongs to the *ministerial* accomplishment of the Covenant of Grace. Only the objects of his death, are to be considered as the objects of his testamentary will; or of the legacies therein bequeathed: He could not bequeath legacies, but to those for whom he purchased the same. He doth not extend his intercession beyond these: And, if his testamentary will were supposed to be more extensive, it must be supposed in so far vain,—and quite unworthy of him: The supposition would be an ascribing of an *intention* to him, which he would not have to be of any effect; which he both knew would be frustrated, and willed that it should be so.

Yet these legacies, in the whole *matter* thereof, are set forth indefinitely by the gospel; so as all are equally called and warranted to receive them, upon the grounds to be afterwards explained,—without any respect to the will of the Testator in his death, more than to the will of God in election. And they come to bear the *form* of legacies to individual persons, not as simply exhibited to them by the gospel, but as also embraced by their faith: The Elect are the secret, and believers are the open legatees of Christ's testament.

The testament became of force, in the death of the Testator; and when he revived, he no way recalled it. On the contrary, he rose and ascended, for having it carried into a full execution. As he had finished the purchase of redemption, in the sacrifice of himself, he had to bring about an application of it, through his intercession. He would not have this left at any uncertainty; his people being as incapable, of themselves, to make the application as the purchase.

purchase. But, *by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place above; for having this great matter absolutely secured, by his appearing in the presence of God for them* *.

There is nothing more plainly expressed and ascertained in Scripture, than this intercession of Christ. He is *even at the right hand of God, and maketh intercession for us: He is able to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him; seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them: We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous* †. And his intercession is most infallible, to be absolutely depended upon by his people; as he hath still to say unto the Father, *I knew that thou hearest me always* ‡. He is therefore making a continual and effectual intercession, with regard to all his people; unto a having all the blessings of his redemption bestowed upon them, and enjoyed by them for ever.

§ II. His intercession, while on earth, was in a *supplicatory* manner; or in the form of prayer. All his praying in those days of his flesh, was *intercessory*; as he could have no employment in a private character: And we have a precious summary of the intercession which he is now making above, in his solemn prayer recorded in the seventeenth chapter of the Gospel according to John. But that former *manner* of intercession cannot consist with his glorified estate. His intercession now is in a different manner; by a solemn and official presenting of himself to God the Father, in the name and on the behalf of all his people: Exhibiting his precious blood and perfect righteousness, as satisfactory for them; and meritorious of all blessings to be bestowed upon them. And this he doth, with an efficacious WIL-
LING

* Heb. ix. 12, 24.
† John ii. 1.

† Rom. viii. 34.; Heb. vii. 25.;
‡ John xi. 42.

LING of all that effect; saying,—*Father, I will* *. It is beyond our line to say, whether the mouth of his glorified body may be uttering any words to this purpose; but a *speaking* is ascribed to his blood †. And though there can be no need of words, for intimating his will to the Father; they could afford unspeakable ravishment to the glorified ears of some of the redeemed already in heaven. When *Paul* was caught up to the third heaven,—he *heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful* (rather *possible*) *for a man to utter* ‡ among mortals.

§ III. The *matter* of Christ's intercession lies in the great and precious promises of the New-Covenant. The promises *peculiar* to Christ, have had their accomplishment; but the promises *to him* concerning them, as also the promises *to them* in him,—have their accomplishment still going on. These promises were all to be fulfilled, upon the condition undertaken by him in the Covenant of Grace; and that condition being fulfilled, all these promises must infallibly be so: No obstruction, from earth or hell, can, in any degree, prevent that happy event. It is this, for which Christ is making continual intercession; upon the ground of his own obedience unto death, and of the Father's faithfulness to him in the New-Covenant. None of these promises are ever forgotten or overlooked by him: Nothing could be abated to him, in the *conditionary* part of the Covenant; and he will abate nothing in the *promissory* part of it. How full is the provision thus made, for the perfect and everlasting salvation of all his people! Nothing in or about them, no efforts of devils or wicked men,—can procure any disappointment of it, in the case of any one of them. The
Father

* John xvii. 24. † Heb. xii. 24. ‡ 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4.

Father still says, concerning his eternal Son; *My mercy will I keep for him for evermore, and my Covenant shall stand fast with him* *.

§ IV. The *objects* of Christ's intercession are a peculiar people, these whom the Father elected from all eternity to everlasting life; then giving them to Christ, for being saved by him. He accordingly said, though with an immediate respect to his eleven Disciples,—*I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me: Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also who shall believe on me through their word* †. And these are the objects of his intercession, under different views:

1st, Some of them are yet *unborn*; but to be so, severally, in their appointed times. The Lord Christ knoweth all these, as being *his*; he looks forward to each individual of them, in the course of ages, as *his sheep* whom he *must bring* ‡: And so, *the people which shall be created shall praise the LORD* ||. Their being brought forth into the natural world, is not properly a matter of *promise*,—but of *divine purpose*: And Christ's intercession has a respect to this purpose; insisting to have it performed in the set time, as subservient to the promises on their behalf.

2^{dly}, Some of them, though born, are continuing for a time in their *natural* estate. And his intercession is for having them preserved in life, through all that time; as also, from the unpardonable sin: Interceding likewise for an ordering of their outward lot, in bringing the means of Grace to them, or them to the means; such as may serve for his gracious design upon them in due season. After this manner, he has an eye upon them and a concern about them;
as

* Psal. lxxxix. 28. † John xvii. 9. 20. ‡ John x. 16.
|| Psal. cii. 18.

as he had with regard to many such in *Corinth*, when he said,—*I have much people in this city* *.

3dly, As he is ever intent upon the approach and arrival of the precise moment which had been fixed, when every one of them should be brought out of their *natural* into a *gracious* state; so he is making intercession for the Holy Spirit then to take possession of their souls,—as the spirit of life, of revelation and of faith: Bringing them into a state of regeneration, justification and adoption; toward a progressive sanctification of nature and life. He will not have these sheep to continue a moment longer out of the fold. His intercession secures an ordering of providential circumstances and gracious means, for bringing them effectually into that fold; one by one. He is, as it were, saying about each,—*Father, I will that this person be now a brand pluckt out of the fire* †: And the blessed event is the same, upon the matter, with them all.

4thly, His intercession, or interposition betwixt God and them, respects all the concerns of his people when brought into a state of *Grace*,—till they be brought into that of *Glory*. It secures their preservation, in the New-Covenant state of peace and holiness: The continued acceptance of their persons, their being still *accepted in the Beloved*; and the acceptance of their gracious services, *acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*: So that they *are complete in him* ‡. It secures all the measures of Grace and gracious attainments, of spiritual health and cure,—which he sees meet to have bestowed upon them: As to “assurance of God’s love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of Grace, and perseverance therein to the end.” It secures all the outward through-bearing, preservation and protec-

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tion,

* Acts xviii. 10.

† Zech. iii. 2.

‡ Eph. i. 6.; 1 Pet. ii. 5.; Col. ii. 10.

tion, leading and guiding,—which he is pleased to have them blessed with; deliverances from evil, defence against the great adversary of their souls, and a working together of all things for their good. Particularly, it maintains their continual access to God by him in prayer,—amidst all their unworthiness; as he *offers up their prayers with much incense* of his own merit: *For through him we have an access by one Spirit unto the Father; boldness, and access with confidence, by the faith of him* *. His intercession likewise secures a blessed death for his people, as dying in him; with an immediate passing of their souls into eternal glory.—So it is that the great Intercessor is continually employed, about all and each of his people; according to his and their interest in each other. As he is *appearing in the presence of God for them*, he is presenting them all to God in his own person: For they are *raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus* †. He is the *fore-runner, entered for them within the veil* ‡: Filling heaven with the good news of their coming after him in their times; to possess these mansions in his Father's house which he hath prepared for them, and which he hath taken actual possession of in their name.

5thly, The objects of Christ's intercession continue to be so, upon the other side of death; when their souls are among *the spirits of just men made perfect*. They are ever intent upon regaining the bodies which they have left behind them in their graves: Heaven will not be fully heaven to them, till they again possess these once vile bodies; *fashioned by him like unto his glorious body* ||. And he is more eminently intent upon having them all at length set down with him on his throne, partaking with him in the

* Rev. viii. 3.; Eph. ii. 18.; iii. 12.

† Eph. ii. 6.

‡ Heb. vi. 20.

|| Phil. iii. 21.

the fulness of glorified humanity.—Their bodies, when in the grave, do *sleep in Jesus* * ; continuing in a state of mysterious union to him, as a part of his mystical body. He hath his heart and eye still upon them, when dissolved into the appearance of common earth: And as he would have their souls to heaven, at passing out of the body; he will also have their bodies to it, out of the grave. For this, he is making continual intercession: In virtue whereof, when he shall one day sit upon *a great white throne*, an effectual demand will be made on the earth and the sea,—for giving up all these bodies to him † ; in a glorious resurrection, reanimated for eternal glory.

§ V. The intercession of Christ, in his unchangeable priesthood, *continueth ever*: It is to be for ever, in exercise and efficacy; when the mystery of God, as to the whole work of Grace shall be finished,—when the Church, now partly militant, shall become wholly triumphant in heaven. He was a *sacrificing Priest*, only for a time; but he is to be a *Priest for ever* ‡, in the way of *intercession*. He will not then have any new benefits to procure by his intercession; as the *promissory* part of the Covenant will then be completely fulfilled. The holiness and happiness of the redeemed in heaven, will be at once carried to the highest perfection that their natures can admit of; which therefore can receive no addition.—But this will not supersede the everlasting continuance of Christ's intercession in the heavenly state. For the redeemed must ever have their standing in him, as the *one Mediator between God and men*; they must ever have their glorious fellowship with the *Three-one-God*, through him in that character. Their being *with him* in heaven through eternity, will depend upon an eternity of that efficacious WILLING which

* 1 Thes. iv. 14. † Rev. xx. 11. 13. ‡ Psal. cx. 4.

which he expressed on earth; *Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world* *.

Were the act and energy of that intercessory WILL to be superseded for a moment, they would immediately lose their place in the state of glory.

S E C T. II.

Of the Accomplishment of the Covenant of Grace, by Christ as a Prophet.

§ I. IN the days of his humiliation, JESUS appeared as a PROPHET; *mighty in deed and word, before God and all the people* †. But he bore a prophetical office before that appearance; as he doth still. He is the primary, the original *Prophet and Teacher*; that character having never belonged, nor belonging to any others, but in a ministerial employment under him. He was of old promised, as a PROPHET whom the LORD would *raise up* in the human family, *like unto Moses* ‡; more like unto him than unto any other Prophet; as he is the great antitypical *Leader and Commander to the people* §: And *Moses* was but a *servant* in erecting the old fabric of the *legal-state*; whereas JESUS came to erect, in its place the new fabric of the *gospel-state*,—as a *Son over his own house* §.

AS a PROPHET, he is the *Messenger of the Covenant of Grace*; manifesting it in the Church: He is *set to be a light of the Gentiles, that he should be for salvation unto the ends of the earth* **.—And the exercise of his *prophetical* office is of great importance to his accom-

* John xvii. 24.

† Luke xxiv. 19.

‡ Deut. xviii. 15.

Acts. iii. 22.

§ Isa. lv. 4.

§ Heb. iii. 5, 6.

** Mal. iii. 1.; Acts xiii. 47.

accomplishment of the Covenant of Grace; as it is immediately through this, that the exercise of his *priestly* office comes to have its proper effect among sinful men.

§ II. The whole revelation that we have in the holy Scriptures hath been brought forth by him, in the exercise of his *prophetical* office. He has therein expounded the law, many things which are originally of natural knowledge; in opposition to manifold ignorance, misapprehensions and errors concerning the same, in the minds of sinful men: And all the prophecies in the books of the Old Testament, were primarily from him as the Great Prophet. He likewise exercised that office as a foreteller of future events on various occasions in the course of his personal ministry; and afterwards by his Apostles, chiefly in the book of *Revelation*.—In all these things, we have *the testimony of Jesus Christ**.

He was peculiarly employed as a Prophet, a *Teacher come from God*, when personally conversant among men in this world. *God who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets; hath, in these last days, spoken unto us by his Son*†. And his personal teaching was most singular, so that *the people were astonished at his doctrine; for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes*: His enemies found themselves obliged to confess, *that never man spake like this man*‡.

§ III. The principal exercise of Christ's prophetic office, lies in the revelation which he has made of divine mysteries; as these are exhibited in the holy Scriptures, and are eminently *the doctrine of the Lord*.

* Rev. i. 2.

† Heb. i. 1, 2.

‡ Matth. vii. 28, 29.; John vii. 46.

*Lord *.* This is the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began;—which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it was at length revealed unto his holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit †: That mystery which was, for many ages, kept an absolute secret from the Gentile nations; and was much kept secret from the Jewish nation also; in comparison with the full discovery which is now made of it by the gospel.

This is the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God; the mystery of his will ‡: Which lies absolutely above the reach of human reason, being wholly a subject of supernatural revelation by Jesus Christ;—for no man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him ||. The first utterance was made of this mystery by Christ himself, in the first promise concerning himself, on the back of the fall; the revelation of it was gradually advanced by him, in the Scriptures of the Old Testament: And, in these of the New Testament, he hath brought it to a state of perfection.

The matter of this revelation is manifold, in all the doctrines and promises of grace: Concerning the person and offices of Christ, with his humiliation and exaltation; the whole mystery and method of salvation through him;—the Covenant of Grace, which was established with him from eternity; the wonderful condition of it, as fulfilled in his obedience unto death; and the further accomplishment which it is still to have, according to the great and precious promises which it contains.—Such is the exercise of his prophetic office, as long ago finished in respect of external dispensation: Such is the complete revelation which he has made to us by the Scriptures, in which

* Acts xiii. 12. † Rom xvi. 25.; Eph. iii. 5.

‡ Eph. i. 9.; iii. 9. || John i. 18.

which he still *speaketh from heaven**; and “unto
 “ which nothing is at any time to be added, whe-
 “ ther by new revelations of the Spirit or tradi-
 “ tions of men.”

§ IV. There is a continued exercise of Christ's prophetical office, in respect of *internal dispensation*. If men had been left to act as they pleased, with regard to that which is *external*; it must have been lost upon all, without ever taking a saving effect upon any. *The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*†: *It cannot be*, while continuing a *carnal mind*; which it must infallibly continue to be, till there be a supernatural renovation of it. Nor is the carnal mind any thing less set against *Christ* and his *gospel*, than against *God* and his *law*. But the glorious Prophet of the Church has not left, he could not leave the *external* revelation which he has made,—not simply to an uncertainty of success among sinners, but to a certainty of having no success among them at all: Which must infallibly have been, and would always be the case; if he should not also make it *internal*, by a supernatural efficacy upon the souls of men. The gospel would come to them quite in vain, as to any other consequence but an aggravating of their condemnation; without coming,—*not in word only, but also in power*‡. The doctrines of it can have no saving effect, but as made *mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds: Casting down imaginations, the reasonings of carnal and corrupt minds; and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*||.

Accordingly, when he comes to prosecute a gra-
 cious

* Heb. xii. 25.

† Rom. viii. 7.

‡ 1 Thess. i. 5.

|| 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

cious design upon persons,—he brings them to an experience of this important truth, that *by the law is the knowledge of sin* *. He brings home the law upon the conscience, in the convincing work of his Spirit: Awakening the person, to a dreadful apprehension of natural sinfulness and misery; making to see himself justly subjected to the curse of the law, and on the brink of everlasting perdition. The person then gets this for a great event of his life, *the commandment came* †; that the law has been made to come in upon him, with an irresistible and alarming power. And as the work of conviction is carried on, he gets what follows for another great event of his life,—*I died*: A death is brought upon him as to his *carnal rest*, in a state of thoughtlessness about his salvation; and as to his *legal rest*, in going about to establish his own righteousness: His mouth is stopped before God, he is self-condemned, he is reduced to a despairing in himself; seeing his wicked and woful condition to be quite irremediable for eternity, according to any thing that he can either do or devise.

The great Prophet, who speaks as never man spake, at length speaks in the word of grace to the person's soul: His mind is enlightened, the eyes of his understanding are opened; unto some beholding of *the righteousness which is of God by faith*. A supernatural, a sweet discovery is made to him, of an open refuge and abundant relief for his guilty conscience just at hand, in the fulfilled condition of the New Covenant; in the full atonement made, and the everlasting righteousness brought in, by the glorious Head of that Covenant.—Such is the exercise of Christ's prophetic office, in respect of *internal dispensation*; with an experience of which the person is then most distinguishingly blessed.

§ V.

* Rom. iii. 20.

† Rom. vii. 9.

§ V. The saving consequence of this dispensation toward and in the person, is most infallible. His soul flies into the refuge which he sees set open to him, it readily embraces the relief which he sees freely offered to him: He takes up his rest before God in Surety-righteousness; he takes hold of God's Covenant of Grace, by an appropriating faith, as to all the righteousness and grace of it; he gives himself over to be saved in the Lord Christ, with an everlasting salvation;—he is thus brought into the bond of the Covenant; unto a blessed settlement for eternity.

These members of the visible Church, who continue strangers to all this in their experience,—are *children of disobedience*, of unper-suadableness. The external dispensation is the same to them as to others: The same alarms are given to them by the law, for flying from the wrath to come; the same offers are made, and the same calls are given to them by the gospel. But they stop their ears and will not hear; they close their eyes, and will not see. It is not merely from natural inability, that they obey not the gospel; but it is immediately from unwillingness, obstinately rejecting the counsel of God against themselves: *This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world; and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.* All the external dispensation with which they are privileged, serves only to render them more inexcusable; so that *it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment, than for them.*

S E C T. III.

Of the Accomplishment of the Covenant of Grace, by Christ as a King.

§ I. Jesus Christ is a KING, as he is GOD.—*All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made* *. Particularly, all rational creatures were made by him, as he is the same one God with the Father: And an absolute dominion over all these as their King, their Lawgiver and Judge, is essential to his Godhead. He is accordingly called *the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God: the blessed and only Potentate; the King of Kings and Lord of Lords* †. He thus exercises an absolute dominion, of both natural and moral government, over all persons and things in this world. He is the LORD, *who hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all* ‡. He who is Mediator, though not as Mediator but as God, has to say of himself; *By me Kings reign, and Princes decree justice,—even all the Judges of the earth* ||.

§ II. Jesus Christ is a King as MEDIATOR; for which he could not have been qualified, but by being a King as God. A kingly office belongs to his mediatory character; and it necessarily doth so: That the salvation which is purchased by him as a Priest, and revealed by him as a Prophet, might not be lost; might be applied and maintained by him as a King.—As a mediatory King, he was to bruise the serpent's head: And many other exhibitions were made of him under that character, in the writings of the Old Testament. A proclamation was issued

* John i. 3.

† Psal. ciii. 19-

‡ 1 Tim. i. 17.; vi. 15.

|| Prov. viii. 15, 16.

lued concerning him, as the *Messiah* who was a-coming; *Say among the heathen, the LORD reigneth, —he cometh to judge the earth: The LORD reigneth, let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof**. The Jewish Church had this glorious premonition concerning him; *Behold thy King cometh: He is just, and having salvation; lowly and riding upon an ass; and upon a colt the foal of an ass: He shall sit and rule upon his throne, and shall be a Priest upon his throne†*. It was promised concerning him who is THE LORD OUR RIGHT OUSNESS; *A King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth: Of the increase of his government and peace, there shall be no end‡*.

The kingly office of Christ is not essential to him; it is delegated by the Father to him as *Mediator*: Concerning which he says; *All power* (power of authority, as the original word signifies,) *is given unto me, in heaven and in earth* ||.—And his mediatory government is no less extensive than his divine government, with regard to the objects thereof: For the Father *hath put all things under his feet; and gave him to be the Head over all things to the Church; —the Father hath committed all judgment unto the Son* §. He hath a right to set up his kingdom of grace in a Church-state over all the earth, wherever he has sheep to bring; and, at one time or other, he doth so: As the Father hath said to him; *I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession***. Wherever he knows that he has other sheep to bring, though at the distance of many generations; there he is mysteriously ordering matters in the mean time, as a mediatory King, toward that gracious issue: And he

* Psal. xcvi. 10, 13.; xcvi. 1.

† Zech. ix. 9.; vi. 13.

‡ Jer. xxiii. 5. 6.; Isa. ix. 7.

|| Matth. xxviii 18.

§ Eph. i. 22.; John v. 22.

** Psal. ii. 8.

he is, in like manner, ordering and disposing of all things through the world, beyond as well as within the boundary of his Church; in a subservience to her present and future benefit.

His mediatory kingdom cannot supersede, or supply the place of his essential kingdom as God; cannot suspend the proper influence of his Godhead: But he has a distinct, though conjunct administration of both these kingdoms. As to the difference betwixt his *divine* and *mediatory* governments, it is not with regard to the *objects* of the one and the other; for the objects of both are materially the same: But the difference lies in the various *manners of administration*. By his divine government, he is ordering and disposing of all persons and things in their natural course toward their natural ends. But, by his mediatory government, he is likewise ordering and disposing of the same persons and things, so far as he is graciously pleased,—in a supernatural course toward supernatural ends: He makes all natural things, even the worst, subservient to the interests of his Church and people: so that *all things work together for their good**.

And Jesus Christ, as a mediatory King, is appointed heir of all things: *The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand*†.—His distinguishing part of the Covenant of Grace, was a fulfilling the *condition* of it; and this he hath done, in the exercise of his priestly office on earth. Upon that ground, the Father's distinguishing part of the Covenant, the *promissory* part of it, was to be fulfilled. And all this was virtually done upon Christ himself; in his resurrection, justification, and reception into glory: All the promises having thus got a primary accomplishment upon his people in him, as their glorified Head. When he *ascended on high*, he *received*

* Rom. viii. 28.

† Heb. i. 2.; John iii. 35.

gived gifts for men: All the promised blessings of the Covenant were put into his hand, treasured up in him; *for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell* *. This account he is still giving of himself to us; *all things are delivered unto me of my Father* †: So that all Covenant blessings must be received by us, immediately out of his hand. Having obtained the *primary* performance of the promises upon himself, in the place and name of his people; he is entrusted with the *secondary* and final performance thereof upon them: *For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, unto the glory of God by us*; he has them all in trust for us. Having completed the *purchase* of redemption, he is entrusted with the *application* of it by his Spirit: Unto a full effectuating of all the promises; and a dispensing of all the promised blessings, as become *the unsearchable riches of Christ* ‡.

§ III. Jesus Christ is a mediatory King, especially in the *visible Church*: He is the alone KING and HEAD of his Church,—as his spiritual, free and independent kingdom; in its nature absolutely different from, and no way subordinated to the kingdoms of this world. Such a kingdom he had for many ages, of a very confined state, in the Jewish Church: But, under the New-Testament, he hath gloriously enlarged that kingdom among the Jews and Gentiles on a level; according to many illustrious prophecies in the Scriptures of the Old Testament, concerning that great event.

He hath instituted peculiar means, for the erection and administration of this kingdom. *When he ascended up on high,—he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers*:

* Psal. lxxviii. 18.; Col. i. 19.

† Matth. xi. 27.

‡ Eph. iii. 8.

teachers: For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ *. He hath established a system of *ordinances* in the Church; of doctrine, worship, government and discipline: And he hath established a succession of ordinary *office-bearers* in the Church, beside some at first who were extraordinary; for the administering of these ordinances. By these means he still gathers numbers of mankind into a visible Church, and maintains them in that state; through different parts of the world, as he sees meet.

This Church consists, partly, of his own elect: But it consists likewise of many others; of all in general who are brought to “ profess the true religion, “ and their children.” This is, “ the kingdom of “ the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of “ God; out of which, there is no ordinary possibi- “ lity of salvation.” This Church is formed and maintained, not only by a supernatural efficacy with which he blessed the means of grace upon some; but likewise by a common, a mere natural and rational efficacy of these means, with a various concurrence of providential circumstances, upon the minds and consciences of many others: And for all this he “ doth, by his own presence and Spirit,” make these outward means effectual.

The visible Church doth thus enjoy “ the com- “ munion of saints, the ordinary means of salvation; “ offers of grace by Christ to all the members of it, “ in the ministry of the Gospel: Testifying, that “ whosoever believes in him shall be saved; and ex- “ cluding none who will come unto him.” He thus reigns in the visible Church as a mediatory King, by all the ordinances and office-bearers which he hath instituted; dispensing his laws, his royal proclamations and calls: And “ the visible Church hath the “ privilege

* Eph. iv. 8. 11, 12.

“ privilege of being under God’s special care and
 “ government ; of being protected and preserved in
 “ all ages, notwithstanding the opposition of all e-
 “ nemies ;”—*and the gates of hell shall not prevail
 against it **.

§ IV. Jesus Christ is a mediatory King, more especially in the *invisible Church*. This is the Church of the converted elect: Of all who are “ gathered
 “ into one, under Christ the Head thereof; and is
 “ the spouse, the body, the fulness of him that fill-
 “ eth all in all.” The exercise of Christ’s kingly office in this Church, is an *internal dispensation*; a secret exercise of it within the souls of men,—dealing with them severally, one by one. There is a beautiful uniformity of this, in the case of all; in the case of those who have been gathered, and who are gathered, and who shall be gathered to Christ. It is, therefore, sufficient here, to consider the present state of the case: Of this internal dispensation, as now carried on by outward means; these means of grace which are common to all the members of the visible Church, and are blessed with a supernatural efficacy upon the souls of some.

But it is to be considered,—that the exercise of Christ’s prophetic and kingly offices, in the souls of those persons, do, as it were, coalesce into *one* internal dispensation. These exercises are, in their nature, distinct; but they are inseparable and interwoven, in Christian experience. The one properly lies in manifestation to a soul, but the other in an exertion of royal authority and power upon the soul. By the one there is *evidence*, and by the other there is *efficacy*; but the evidence is with efficacy, and the efficacy is with evidence. What has, therefore, been observed in the last section, about the nature and
 consequence

* Matth. xvi. 18.

consequence of the internal exercise of Christ's prophetic office,—is to be considered as taking place through a conjunct exercise of his kingly office; at the same time *speaking* and *doing* in souls,—*his word being with power* *. After the same manner, what may be further observed about the internal exercise of his kingly office,—is to be considered as implying a conjunct exercise of his prophetic office; working in souls, through illumination.

§ V. These whom Christ gathers to himself by the means of grace, are naturally as all others among whom they live: He finds them dead in trespasses and sins, walking according to the course of this world, children of disobedience; without strength, ungodly, enemies; the children of wrath, even as others. But nothing of all this, in their case, can withstand the almighty power by which he brings them to himself. And he has full *authority*, as a mediatory King, for exerting that power in a gracious efficacy upon them. By the execution of his priestly office, in the satisfaction which he hath made, and the righteousness which he hath fulfilled,—all bars, on God's part, are removed out of the way of this efficacy. He hath satisfied all the natural claims of the justice and law of God upon them; so that the way is fully cleared, for his dealing with them by an immediate exertion of his authoritative or mediatory power,—working graciously in them, to the highest glory of all the divine perfections. And it is a very new condition which they are thus brought into; vastly distinguishing them from the world that lieth in wickedness. As,

1st, They are made *willing*, in the day of his power †: Willingly obedient to the calls of his grace, willingly embracing the offers of his grace. These who

* Luke iv. 32.

† Psal. cx. 3.

were some time alienated, and enemies in their mind by wicked works, (or by their mind, taking effect in wicked works); yet now hath he reconciled *. He brings them into the bond of the Covenant †: Into a New Covenant state, into a state of peace and acceptance with God; a state of sonship, which is a state of heirship as to all the blessings of the New Covenant. His righteousness, which was formerly *unto* them, by a gracious offer of it,—comes now to be *upon* them, by a gracious imputation of it for their justification: His Spirit takes possession of them, as the Spirit of adoption; the good work is begun in them, by his working faith in them,—and implanting all the other graces of the Spirit in their souls.

And all this is brought about, by an exceeding greatness of his power, in a very sweet and mysterious exertion of it upon them. He quickens them, into a state of new life; they are regenerated, made new creatures: He gives them a *new heart*, he puts a *new spirit* within them ‡. As their minds are supernaturally enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, their wills are renewed; brought over to a compliance with his will in the gospel: So that they are persuaded and enabled to embrace Jesus Christ; to receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as freely offered to them in the gospel.

Though this great work be the same in all, as to the *matter* of it; there is a great diversity, as to the *manner* of his bringing it to that happy issue.—There is always a conviction of sin and misery by the law, but in very different degrees of impression. In some, it is only a breaking of their *carnal* and *legal* rest,—by alarms of his word, and occurrences of providence; but in others, it is a filling them with the *terrors* of the Lord. Some may be, for a good length of time, exercised in this manner, the one way or

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the

* Col. i. 21.

† Ezek. xx. 37.

‡ Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

the other, and with various interruptions; having to say, according to their different circumstances,—there is *no soundness in my flesh, neither is there any rest in my bones: The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow* *. Though some may be long exercised this way, others are brought more quickly to an happy outgate: Which was the case with *Peter's* hearers on the day of Pentecost; and with the jailor,—whose sudden conviction made him to cry out, *What shall I do to be saved* †? But some are sweetly brought in to Christ at once, under a joint discovery of sin and salvation; as *Philip's* hearers in Samaria ‡. They

* Psal. xxxviii. 3.; cxvi. 3.

† Acts ii. 37. 41.; xvi. 30, 31, 34.

‡ Acts viii. 6, 8, 12.

‡ [*The author thinks it proper to introduce here, the following passage in a sermon which he preached and published some time ago, on John x. 16.*]

The Lord Christ takes various ways of dealing with his sheep, in bringing them.—With some he has a preparatory work, for a considerable length of time; less or more gradual and distinct. He breaks their *carnal rest*, their natural and brutal-like indifference about the state of their souls; in their minding only earthly things, fulfilling the corrupt desires of the flesh and of the mind. Through means of what knowledge they have, and by various concurring providences, he brings them under serious considerations about another world; about death, the judgment beyond it,—and their eternal condition to be thereby determined, according to the forebodings of a guilty conscience: So that they cannot longer find their former satisfaction, in any temporal enjoyments or prospects.

He next breaks their *legal rest*, in going about to establish their own righteousness. Under convictions of their natural sinfulness and misery,—they first endeavour to please God, and satisfy their own consciences, by the works of the law. They set about reformation, at first more superficial and coarse; next, more internal and refined,—seeking righteousness *as it were by the works of the law*: And they may come to be so *evangelical-like*, in this legal exercise, that they seem to be driven off from all depen-

They are subdued, by a secret and most gracious efficacy, to the obedience of faith : That faith which sees, embraces and rests upon Jesus Christ ; particularly, as to all that work of priesthood which he finished on the cross. And how glorious is the rest which a person thus finds for his soul ; after being disquieted and distressed, by apprehensions of his own guiltiness and of God's wrath !—The Psalmist said to the Lord in a rapture of thankful joy ; *I will offer unto thee burnt sacrifices of fatlings, with the incense of rams :*

dependence but on the righteousness of Christ ; only that they still seek something in what they feel or do, though still in vain,—as a sort of necessary preparation or warrant for taking up that dependence. But at length all their reformatorys, regularities, good frames, serious endeavours, religious strictness, resolutions and vows ; all these are made to fail them, as to a ground of soul-rest : And they are brought to their wits end, sometimes under great terrors in a law work ; before a day of the revelation of Christ comes to dawn in their souls.

With others, our Lord deals in a more sweet and summary way. He draws them *with cords of a man, with bands of love* : As it were discovering to them at once the malady and medicine, the ruin and relief ; in a sweet and kindly manner drawing them to himself.

But whatever be his particular way of bringing his sheep, it comes all to this ; That they are brought off from the *law of works*, and brought over to the *law of faith*. They are brought off from the law of works, from all ways of doing for life ; from all dependence on any *active* righteousness, or that to which they contribute any thing by their own activity. In the evangelical-like manner of legal exercise to which they may come, the mediatory and justifying righteousness of Christ is what they only have as a matter of rational speculation ; it is not that righteousness itself which they contemplate, but only a general and dark *notion* of it in their minds ; and an awakened soul can never find rest in a notion. But they are at length brought over to the law of faith : To the constitution of grace,—according to which a guilty sinner obtains the pardon of all his sins, and is accepted of as righteous in the sight of God ; only for the righteousness of Christ, imputed to him, and received by faith alone. He is thus brought to take up an immediate and absolute dependence

rams: I will offer bullocks, with goats *. This was, in itself, a poor offering; most unworthy of God, otherwise than the typical consideration which David had of it. But the person now spoken of has a far higher strain of language, to fill his heart and mouth; concerning the great atonement for sin, as already made in the death of Christ. He has to say, along with others who are blessed as he; *We joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement* †. He has to say of it; This is the true atonement for sin,—which the Judge of all hath received from my Surety-priest, as an atonement for all my sins: I have received it into my faith, as freely offered to me,—never to part with it: And I will offer it to God, I will ever hold it up to him; as my only, my sure, my all-sufficient ground of confidence and boldness before his throne!

2dly, All who are exalted into this happy state, are *under the law of Christ* ‡; the same law, which is summarily comprehended in the ten commandments.

They are wholly delivered from that law, redeemed from a being any longer under it; with regard to its natural form, as a *Covenant-law*. In this respect it is *dead to them*, and they are *dead to it* †. It is of no force, of no existence upon or against them; as
a law

dence for life on that new ground, which *Luther* calls the *passive* righteousness; to which he has contributed nothing,—while he is quite passive, as to the manifestation then made of it in his soul. It is this righteousness *itself* which he then sees, by the eyes of an enlightened understanding, in all the glorious reality and sufficiency of it: And he claims it as his own, seeing it as God's free gift to him. His soul thus enters into that rest, as *his* rest for eternity; though by more distinct actings of faith in some, than in others,—yet the same, as to the matter, in all those whom Christ brings.

* Psal. lxvi. 15.

† Rom. v. 11.

‡ 1 Cor. ix. 21.

¶ Rom. vii. 4. 6.

a law requiring perfect obedience for eternal life, and cursing to eternal death for every disobedience. Wherefore, in point of *right*, and (so far as they are properly exercised) in point of *fact*,—they have no more ado with that Covenant-law, than a woman has with a husband in the grave; or than a dead man has ado with the laws of the country in which he formerly lived.

But while they have no concern with the Covenant-law, in the matter of their *justification*; they have a most lively concern with it, according to all its extent and spirituality,—as a rule of life or righteousness, in the matter of their *sanctification*. The natural writing of it upon their hearts, as a Covenant-law, is blotted out; so far as regards the reigning power thereof: And all the bias toward it which continues in them, for seeking any ground of dependence before God in what they feel or do,—is ranked among the remainders of their natural corruption, to be gradually purged out. In place of the *natural*, they are blessed with a *supernatural* writing of the moral law upon their hearts*; entirely divested of the promise and penalty which naturally belongs to it as a Covenant-law.

It is therefore *to Christ* that they are under the law; while he takes the moral law, in its supernatural state, or as divested of its Covenant-form,—for the rule of spiritual government in his mediatory kingdom. His true subjects have all their dependence upon his service and suffering, by which he has fulfilled the righteousness of the law for them as a Covenant of Works: But their dependence on his *righteousness*, is with a most willing subjection to his *rule*; sweetly constrained by his love, to live unto him. And as they live under a partial writing of the law upon their hearts, it is according to the rule of that
law

* Heb. viii. 10.

law as perfectly written in the Scriptures: But in the faith of its being divested, with regard to them, of the Covenant-form which it still naturally bears as written there.—Thus it is, that as Christ has them *redeemed from all iniquity*, in respect of guilt unto condemnation; he has them likewise *purified unto himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works* *. They have it for their great concern, *to cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit; perfecting holiness in the fear of God* †.

3dly, All these who are ruled by Christ, as his true subjects, are well provided for by him.—They have their dwelling in the glorious house of the New Covenant; they *dwell on high, they dwell in God: The eternal God is their refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms* ‡. They are *cloathed with the garments of salvation, covered with the robe of righteousness* §. They have the richest provision for their faith, in *exceeding great and precious promises*; wherein are *given unto them all things that pertain unto life and godliness* §. The most nourishing and delicious food for their souls, and the most efficacious medicines for all their spiritual diseases.—are still at hand, in his word and ordinances; of which he makes an application to them by his Spirit, enabling them to apply the same unto themselves. They have an abundance of grace in him and from him, for all their spiritual work and warfare.—And as to their outward conditions, he provides for them what he sees best; in matters of necessity, convenience, and comfort: With a special blessing, upon both their enjoyments and wants.

4thly, Under his protection they *dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil* **. He is their *fortress*

* Tit. ii. 14.

† 2 Cor. vii. 1.

‡ Isa. xxxiii. 16.; 1 John iv. 16.; Deut. xxxiii. 27.

§ Isa. lxi. 10.

§ 2 Pet. i. 3, 4.

** Prov. i. 33.

ress and deliverer, their shield and buckler *; defending them against all enemies, men and devils: Farther than as he now suffers these to have some prevalence over them, for their good. He restrains and overcomes all his and their enemies, they are made to triumph over all these; Christ-mystical will finally triumph, as Christ-personal hath done. However much they may be distressed, even destroyed, for a time, they will have to say in the event; *In all these things we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us* †.

5thly, Though he is fully reconciled to their persons, as much now as he will be in heaven for ever; yet he is no way reconciled to their sins: Yea these, from the singular aggravations thereof, are more displeasing to him than the sins of any others. They have therefore to *endure chastening; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth* ‡. He *will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes* ||. He doth so, in a manifold variety of trials or troubles, external and internal,—which he brings upon them, or suffers them to fall into. But his displeasure and controversy, in all this matter, doth properly terminate upon their sins; and never upon their persons, however much they may sometimes apprehend the contrary. Their persons are never the real objects of divine wrath or displeasure, even under their severest chastenings; all these are still from love to their persons: Their justification, their acceptance in the Beloved, is invariable, amidst all such contentings with them *he will rest in his love, he will joy over them with singing* §.

6thly, They are *preserved in Jesus Christ* **. Their perseverance, to the end, is infallibly secured: Per-
severance

* Psal. xviii. 2.; xci. 4. † Rom. viii. 37. ‡ Heb. xii. 6, 7.
|| Psal. lxxxix. 32. § Zech. iii. 17. ** Jude, ver. 1.

severance in the state of grace,—of acceptance with God, as objects of his highest favour; perseverance in the habit of grace, the grace of their new nature;—and perseverance, in the exercise of grace, according to their several measures thereof; through recoveries from falls, and from all spiritual indispositions. *They are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation* *. Christ makes continual and effectual intercession for them, *that their faith fail not* *. He never fails to do as he has said,—*I will instruct thee, and teach thee the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye:—When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the floods, they shall not overflow thee: When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee* †. He says to each of them,—*Fear thou not, for I am with thee; I will strengthen thee, I will help thee, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness* ||.—They cannot but be surely and finally preserved; when they are continually in Christ's hand, and in the Father's hand: Hands, out of which none is able to pluck them § !

7thly, They will all be brought forward unto a state of perfection, in holiness and happiness; as to both their souls and bodies, for ever. This perfection will be enjoyed in their bodies, when he shall appear the second time. It is enjoyed in their souls at death; as these are then made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory: Finding the way into it consecrated and kept open for them, by their glorious Forerunner. Then do they take their prepared place in *the general assembly and church of the first-born which are written in heaven; among the spirits*

* 1 Pct. i. 5.

† Luke xxii. 32.

‡ Psa. xxxii. 8.; Isa. xliii. 2.

|| Isa. xli. 10.

§ John x. 28, 29.

spirits of just men made perfect *. They have a joyful meeting with Christ, at their expiring on death-beds; as come for *receiving them unto himself, that where he is there they may be also*: Being ever intent on having them *with him*, in due time, *where he is*; *that they may behold his glory* †.

H E A D II.

Of the ministerial Accomplishment of the Covenant of Grace.

THE whole accomplishment of this Covenant among men, is by Jesus Christ as Mediator. The *conditionary* part of it immediately belonged to him, to be personally fulfilled by him. As to the *promissory* part of it, the *primary* accomplishment of this hath been effected by God the Father upon Christ himself; so that he got all the promises made over to him, for effectuating the *secondary* accomplishment thereof upon his people: As hath been explained.

Under the head of the *mediatory* accomplishment of the Covenant of Grace, in the special sense of that expression; a view has been taken of what Christ hath done immediately by himself: As also of what he hath done and still doth immediately by his Spirit, through his word and ordinances. The things to be considered under the head of the *ministerial* accomplishment of that Covenant, belongs also to his mediatory accomplishment of it, according to the general sense of the expression; but through the intervention of a public ministry which he hath estab-

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* Heb. xii. 23. † John xiv. 3.; xvii. 24.

blished, for dispensing his ordinances in the visible Church.

There are ordinances of *government* and *discipline*; which he blesteth for forming and upholding the Church-state, and for maintaining the visible purity of that body. There is the ordinance of the *public worship* of God through Christ, as performed by solemn and stated assemblies; in which, so far as it is performed according to his will, he is graciously present. There are sacramental ordinances, of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper*; which he blesteth for their different ends: As, by the one, members are initiated into the visible Church, under a solemn dedication of them to him; and, by the other, his people are especially fed and nourished—built up in holiness and comfort, through faith unto salvation.—Concerning all these ordinances, as to the nature and administration of them, there are various controversies among particular churches: But it doth not consist with the design of the present Contemplations, to enter into these controversies; which may be found discussed, on all sides, in various other publications.

What is proposed here, is—to take some view of the ministerial accomplishment of the Covenant of Grace, by the great ordinance of the *preaching of the gospel*; which is the same to all particular churches, so far as of a Christian state and management.

The preaching of the gospel is an ordinance which Christ hath instituted, for being continued in his Church through all ages. The Scriptures of the New Testament abound with exemplary views of this great ordinance. Our Lord gave a most express commission to his Apostles; *Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature* *. This commission which they got, was not confined to themselves:

* Mark xvi. 15.

selves: It comprehended all who should be regularly employed in that work through all succeeding ages; as he added,—*Lo, I am with you alway even unto the end of the world* *. He declared his will and purpose, *that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name; even among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem* †. It is a standing article in the great mystery of godliness, that Christ is *preached unto the Gentiles* ‡. This is the great mean through which the exercise of his prophetic and kingly offices is carried on: By which he gradually gathers sinners unto himself, and enables his people to build up themselves in their most holy faith.—It is thus an ordinance of distinct respects, to the members of the *visible* and of the *invisible* Church.

S E C T. I.

Of the Ordinance of Preaching, as it respects the Members of the visible Church.

§ I. THIS ordinance is of indispensable necessity in the visible Church.—It must be wholly conformed to the holy Scriptures, these must afford all the matter of it; it must contain nothing against or beyond them ||. But the fulness of the Scriptures, even when the canon thereof is now completed, cannot supersede the necessity of preaching. The reading of these, as also of other books illustrating the same,—is blessed for the conviction and conversion of sinners, as also for their subsequent edification. Yet the benefit of them is not left, even mainly, to depend upon the reading; a privilege which, in former ages, was not commonly enjoyed: And however common now, it is only of a private nature; nor could

* Matth. xxviii. 20.

† 1 Tim. iii. 16.

‡ Luke xxiv. 47.

|| Isa. viii. 20.

could it properly serve the designs of grace, if the Scriptures were subjected to the precarious care of individuals about using that privilege.

The Church is of a public state, to which a public dispensation of the word is essential; bringing it to the ears of multitudes at once, many of whom might not be capable or careful to read it. And the preaching is instituted for a profitable explaining and applying of those doctrines and duties which are proposed in the Scriptures. It is therefore an ordinance of most eminent consideration in the New Testament, mentioned in it above an hundred times; and is peculiarly blessed for effectuating the designs of grace: As a *believing* in Christ for salvation, is especially through a *hearing* of him; from the mouth of those who are really sent to *preach the gospel of peace* *,—sent forth as heralds, to proclaim the gracious edicts of the King on the holy hill of Zion.

§ II. This ordinance is, in general, a preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ. But it is not confined to the matter of the *gospel*, according to the strict and peculiar sense of this word: It doth not simply mean a publishing of the peculiar mysteries of Christianity; of gracious doctrines and promises, of gracious offers and calls. It comprehends also the whole doctrine of our natural estate of cursedness and corruption; with the whole doctrine of the law of the Covenant of Works: According to the subservience of all this doctrine unto the gospel of our salvation; a doctrine of salvation being absurd, even inconsistent with common sense, but in connection with the doctrine of what we need to be saved from.—And the members of the visible church, who are immediately and equally the objects of all this preaching, are
here

* Rom. x. 14, 15.

here considered as the same with *gospel-bearers*; all who are providentially brought within the reach of it.

§ III. By the ordinance of preaching, gospel-hearers have an alarm sounded to them about the sinfulness and misery of their natural estate; which has been somewhat explained in another place *. That, in general,—

1st, They have come into the world under the guilt of the first sin: As having been represented by the first man, in the *positive* state which the Covenant of Works was brought into with him; having accordingly sinned in him and fallen with him, in his first transgression. *By one man's disobedience, many were made sinners: By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation* †.

2^{dly}, They have come into the world under a want of original righteousness: Under a want of God's image upon their souls, in knowledge and righteousness and holiness; as having been forfeited by the guilt of the first sin. Every one needs to be *renewed—after the image of him that created him*: For *there is none righteous, no not one* ‡.

3^{dly}, They have come into the world with an universal corruption of nature; *shapen in iniquity, and conceived in sin* ||: With natures of an absolute disconformity and opposition to the nature and will of God; having in them the seeds of all actual transgressions.

4^{thly}, The corruption of their lives is answerable to that of their natures: They *live in error* §; in a habitual course of estrangement from and rebellion against God. *The wickedness of man is great in the earth*;

* Part I. Chap. VII.

† Rom. v. 18, 19.

‡ Col. iii. 10.; Rom. iii. 10.

|| Psal. li. 5.

§ 2 Pet. ii. 18.

earth; as every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is only evil continually*.

5thly, They are in a state of actual and absolute subjection to the Covenant of Works: Under an exaction of perfect obedience to it in every point for life, though they cannot perform a real obedience to it in any point; and under a sentence of eternal death for every disobedience: *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them* †.

6thly, They are absolutely incapable of recovering themselves from the estate of sin and misery; altogether *without strength* for it ‡. They can never discharge the indispensable claim of the Covenant-law; in respect of satisfaction for sin: More than in respect of obedience; which requires a change of their natures, in order to a proper change of life.

7thly, They are not only without strength, but they are *enemies* ||: Enemies, not only to the authority and will of God in his law; but likewise to all the device of the grace and wisdom of God for their recovery.—Their case is therefore absolutely desperate; so far as can fall within the reach of any natural endeavours or apprehensions: They can have nothing to look for, according to the Covenant law which they are under,—but to be *punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power* §.

These things which can be but generally pointed out in this place, admit of great enlargements,—in solemn dealing with sinners about their salvation.

§ IV. By the ordinance of preaching, a publication is made to gospel hearers of *good tidings of great joy* **. The principal matter of the preaching to which

* Gen. vi. 5.

|| Rom. v. 10.

† Gal. iii. 10.

§ 2 Thes. i. 9.

‡ Rom. v. 6.

** Luke ii. 10.

which that of the things abovementioned is subservient, is the gospel of salvation:—The whole doctrine of the Covenant of Grace; as to the establishment of that Covenant, and the fulfilled condition of it (in Christ's obedience unto death), with the great and precious promises of it: The doctrine of the person of Christ and of his mediatory offices: The doctrine of his priesthood; as to his incarnation, service, suffering, resurrection, exaltation, and intercession: The doctrine of the continued exercise of his prophetic and kingly offices: More particularly, the doctrine of his justifying righteousness; and of his sanctifying grace.

And all this wonderful doctrine is preached, not for mere amusement to the understandings of those who hear it. It is preached, as the *word of salvation sent unto them*; as the *gospel of their salvation*, as the *salvation of God sent unto the Gentiles*. And, in this public dispensation of the gospel, there is made to all the hearers of it, immediately and equally,—a most gracious *offer* of Christ, and all his salvation; with a most gracious *call* unto them, for their receiving and resting upon him accordingly.—On this momentous subject, the following things may be considered*.

The

* What follows in this section, is mostly extracted, though with some variations,—from the *seventh article* of an *act* about doctrine, passed by the Associate Synod above thirty years ago; and from an *illustration* of that article, by four ministers of the Synod, as a committee,—of whom the present writer only survives: And some parts from an *appendix* to these. He may be excused from distinguishing, by marks of quotation, the passages now borrowed from that article, illustration, and appendix; because these were originally and altogether of his own composition: But he so distinguishes what is taken from the article referred to. The whole (concerning the *gospel-call* and the *warrant of faith*) is to be seen at large, in the second volume of his *Display of the Secession-Testimony*.

The *gospel-offer* and *call* do proceed “upon the
 “ foundation of the *intrinsic sufficiency* of the death
 “ of CHRIST; his relation of a *Kinsman-redeemer* to
 “ mankind-sinners as such: And the *promise* of eter-
 “ nal life to” them “as such, in the gospel.” And,
 1st, As to the *intrinsic sufficiency* of our Lord’s
 death, it lies in this: That “the atonement and
 “ righteousness of Christ, are, in themselves, of a
 “ justice-satisfying and law-magnifying nature; con-
 “ taining the utmost of what law and justice can re-
 “ quire, for repairing the whole breach of the Co-
 “ venant of Works, and fulfilling the same,—in or-
 “ der to the justification and salvation of mankind-
 “ sinners as such, who are warranted to betake them-
 “ selves thereto by faith.”

Thus, though our Lord came to redeem only a part of mankind, he did not come to fulfil only a part of the law in their place; and to bear only a part of its curse for them: As there can be no distinguishing of this matter into parts. Nothing *less* could have been sufficient for the redemption of any one of them, than a fulfilling the whole commands of the law,—and a bearing its whole curse; all which he has done: Nor could any thing *more* have been requisite, in the nature of the case, for the redemption of all sinners who are under the same broken Covenant. And while none are justified as *elect*,—but as *mankind sinners*, who are betaking themselves to this atonement and righteousness by faith; all of these are warranted to do so, wherever the gospel comes.—Such is the *intrinsic sufficiency* of our Lord’s death, the justice-satisfying, and law-magnifying nature of his atonement and righteousness; a ground of sufficient validity and extent, for the most free and extensive offer and call of the gospel to sinners of mankind.

2dly, Christ's relation of a *Kinsman-redeemer* to them, lies both in his *person* and *offices*. For,

1. "OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, in the glorious constitution of his *person*, as God-man, *Immanuel*, *God with us*,—doth stand in an equal and undistinguished relation of a *Kinsman-redeemer*, to mankind-sinners as such." The relation here spoken of, is not such as arises from any act of Christ's design or intention concerning them: But it is such as arises from the *constitution* of the *person* of Christ,—in his being God-man, a Redeemer in human nature; and this relation can no more belong to the elect, than to any other sinners in the same nature.

Christ indeed stands in a very special and distinguished relation of a *Kinsman-redeemer*, to the elect; from the act of the Father's will in giving them to him, and the act of his own will in undertaking for them: Which relation is wholly abstracted from, in the offer made of Christ to them and others by the gospel. But, as he is *God manifest in the flesh*, bearing the public capacity of a Redeemer,—made under the law in man's nature: this makes his *person* to stand in the relation of a *Kinsman-redeemer* to all mankind-sinners,—without any distinction between the elect and others: Because the elect are no otherwise *sinners*, and no otherwise *men*, than as all the rest of mankind are.

2. Our Lord Jesus Christ bears this farther relation of a *Kinsman-redeemer* to them; that "his mediatory *offices*, in the true and glorious nature thereof,—do stand in an equal and undistinguished relation and suitableness, to the case and need of mankind-sinners as such." There is indeed a very special, a distinguished relation and suitableness of his offices to the elect; from his becoming an undertaker for them in these offices: Which also is wholly abstracted from, in the offer made of Christ

by the gospel. But the relation and suitability which arises from the glorious nature of these offices, must belong to all mankind sinners,—without any distinction between the elect and others; because the case and need of the elect, is just of the same nature with that of all others: As the office of a physician, in its nature, is the same way related to the condition of all diseased persons; especially such as are all in the same disease.

And from the common relation of a Kinsman-redeemer, which Christ thus bears to mankind, he is every way fit for being employed and rested upon by them; in his person, offices, atonement and righteousness: Which is a ground of sufficient validity and extent, for the most extensive offer and call of the gospel to sinners of mankind.

3dly, There are “ *absolute promises* of justification and eternal life through Christ, to mankind-sinners as such, in the gospel; the possession of which blessings is to be certainly obtained, in the way of believing.”

In the original transaction of the New Covenant, all the promises bear a special and particular direction to the elect,—all their names being, as it were, severally recorded therein: So that the promises, as there laid, are an expression of God’s gracious purpose concerning each of them particularly, and them only. But the matter is far otherwise, in the administration of that Covenant by the gospel. For the gospel, as it were, brings forth an extract from that glorious original,—in which extract, the promises bear an *indefinite* direction; a blank being left, where the names of the elect are recorded in the original: So that these promises, as laid out to men in the gospel, do abstract from all regard to any as *elect*,—to any more than others; or they have a respect to them only as *sinners* of mankind.

And

And these absolute promises to them in the gospel, are not to be *immediately* considered as an expression of God's *purpose*,—or as a declaring of what he will do, in the performance thereof; but they are to be immediately considered, as an expression of God's *free offer* so to do and perform. And this offer is equally made to every hearer of the gospel, warranting them all to apprehend and apply the promises by faith: While the possession of all promised blessings is to be certainly obtained in the way of believing; the Lord never failing to sustain faith's appropriation of the promises, so as to perform the same unto all believers. Neither are these promises to be considered, as an expression or declaration of God's *purpose* to any in particular, but as they come to be accepted and rested upon; or as persons are determined to fill up their names in the blank, by the hand of an applying faith: Which all gospel hearers are equally and immediately warranted to do, by God's offer and call.

Such then is the direction and indorsement which the absolute promises of justification and eternal life, through Christ, do bear to mankind—sinners indefinitely; in the dispensation of the gospel: And such is the claim they have to these promises, a claim every way sufficient to faith; having no dependence on God's intention or design, as to those for whom the promises were originally made. And seeing they make an exhibition of Christ to all gospel hearers,—in his person, offices, atonement and righteousness; or do bring him and his salvation to every sinner's door, in a full and free offer: This is a glorious foundation, a sufficient ground,—for the general call of the gospel.

Moreover, this *call* is not man's, but God's: There is “an interposal of divine authority in the
“gospel call; immediately requiring all the hearers
“thereof

“ thereof to receive and rest upon CHRIST alone for
 “ salvation, as he is freely offered to them in the
 “ gospel.” And from this call of divine authority,
 upon the sufficient foundation which has been considered;
 “ all the hearers of the gospel are privileged
 “ with an equal, full and immediate warrant,—to
 “ make a particular application and appropriation
 “ of Christ, with all his redemption and salvation,
 “ severally unto themselves, by a true and lively
 “ faith.”

The Lord is pleased to gather his elect from among others, by such a dispensation of the gospel as takes no more notice of them than others: And if this were not the case, there could be no room at all for any outward dispensation of the gospel; nor for the mystery of faith in obeying the same. The glorious Redeemer, with his plenteous redemption, is equally set forth to all by the gospel: For being received and rested upon, according to the present revelation and exhibition to every one; not according to what views were had of particular persons, in the original providing of such a Redeemer and redemption. And this unlimited method of dispensation, is what the Lord blesteth for gathering in his elect: While they are thus gathered in upon no other ground, by no other invitation or welcome, than what is common to them, with all other hearers of the gospel. The matter of the gospel is equally suited to the sinful and miserable condition of these others; it is equally *good* for them,—who are under a *natural* obligation to *seek good and not evil, that they may live* *. And the Lord’s sovereign purpose of leaving them to perish in their rebellion and unbelief, can no way interfere with his making them objects of the gospel-call; no more than it can interfere with his continued requiring of their due obedience

* Amos v. 14.

bedience and conformity to the moral law, which his purpose leaves them to trample upon.

§ V. All the hearers of the gospel are under the highest obligation to embrace the gracious *offer* which is made to them, of Christ and all his salvation; to comply with the gracious *call* which is given to them for believing on him, receiving and resting upon him alone for salvation. *This is the work of God*, the first and principal business which he prescribes to them, *to believe on him whom he hath sent* *. *This is most eminently his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ*: Under this high certification, *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned* †.—Such is the course which all the hearers of the gospel, without distinction, are called to take; for justification and eternal life. And it may be observed, that,

1st, “ In the case of a sinner’s justification, law
 “ and justice have *no respect* to God’s sovereign
 “ counsel about what persons belong to the election
 “ of grace,—for whom only Christ was employed to
 “ make satisfaction and fulfil all righteousness, and
 “ for whom alone he intentionally did so: Or,
 “ which is materially the same, they have *no respect*
 “ to the particular objective destination or intention
 “ of Christ’s satisfaction and righteousness, in the
 “ transaction of the New Covenant; as any way be-
 “ longing to the *pleadableness* thereof at the bar of
 “ law and justice. But law and justice have a re-
 “ spect *only* unto the justice-satisfying and law-
 “ magnifying *nature* of this atonement and righte-
 “ ousness; in behalf of every sinner who is found
 “ betaking himself thereunto by faith upon the di-
 “ vine warrant,—as the same is *unto all and upon*
 “ *all*

* John vi. 29. † 1 John iii. 23.; Mark xvi. 16.

"all them that believe, without any difference." Christ is freely and equally offered to all: *To him give all the prophets witness; that through his name, whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins* *. Though elect and believers will prove to be all one in the event; yet the matter is ordered by such a mystery of divine wisdom, as to leave no bar in the way of believing,—with respect to any where-ever the gospel comes. For,

2dly, "The formal ground and reason of faith—doth *nowise* lie in any particular objective destination of Christ's satisfaction and righteousness, or in any particular objective intention where-with he made and fulfilled the same. But it *wholly* lies in the glorious person and offices of Christ, with his satisfaction and righteousness,—as freely and *equally* set forth by the gospel, unto all the hearers thereof: With the Lord's gracious call and command, for *each* of them to come over by faith unto this glorious foundation;" in a dependence on the absolute promises which have been considered.

And a person is united to Christ,—through an embracing of him by faith, in obedience to that call. The righteousness of Christ is graciously imputed to the person: He is invested with this justifying righteousness, enjoys pardon and peace through the same, is accepted as righteous in God's sight on account thereof; and is endued with a personal right to all the privileges of the sons of God, as being graciously received into their number.

3dly, As faith is a receiving of Christ, its *receiving* act is an act of *belief* or *persuasion*. It truly receives; as the eye receives light, as the hand receives a gift, or as the mouth receives food. But while it thus receives from God, as he reaches out the blessing

* Acts x. 43.

blessing in the word of grace, and so receives what the person *formerly had not* ; this is just a *believing* that he *presently has* it all for his own, as *presently sustained* to be so, at the bar of law and justice.

It is therefore an *appropriating persuasion* which belongs to the nature of faith : Greatly differing from that sensible assurance of an interest in Christ, or of salvation, which arises from a view of the Lord's work in the heart ; or which we are privileged with, —when *the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God*. Without any respect to divine purposes and intentions, or to the person's inward experiences ; an appropriating faith proceeds wholly upon the present revelation of Christ in the gospel.

There it finds an object fully suitable and satisfying ; even the glorious person and offices of Christ, with his satisfaction and righteousness,—as in themselves considered. And it takes up a sufficient ground, a full warrant, for *appropriating* this glorious object to the person's self ; with a firm persuasion of an interest therein to eternal life : Just as it finds the same freely and equally set forth by the gospel, unto all the hearers thereof ; with the gracious call and absolute promises which accompany that exhibition of Christ. The person sees that he would be a rejecter of the whole, if he did not believe with an appropriation of the whole to himself ; while the revelation of grace is made to him for this purpose, or for none at all.—Such a wonderful power and privilege it is, which God bestows on true faith,—that *he makes* all to be personally and savingly a *man's own* : just as the man is *taking* all to himself, and *making* all his own, by an appropriating persuasion of faith.

4thly, This faith is a *supernatural persuasion* ; it is the *gift of God*, of the *operation of God* * : What no man
is

* Eph. ii. 8. ; Col. ii. 12.

is capable of working out in himself, as all his natural apprehensions and inclinations stand in opposition to it. The offers and calls of the gospel can never be truly understood and acquiesced in, by common sense or reason; for they are among the *things of the Spirit of God, which the natural man receiveth not, neither can know.*

But the Lord powerfully works this faith, in the souls of his own elect. The gospel comes unto them; *not in word only; but also in power.* The Holy Spirit becomes unto them, *the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ: And the eyes of their understanding are enlightened.*—Then it is, that their particular access to Christ in the outward offer of the gospel, with their immediate warrant to appropriate redemption through his blood,—becomes a matter of powerful demonstration to them, by which they are pleasantly constrained to the obedience of faith.

5thly, All the hearers of gospel, who remain and perish in their unbelief, must prove utterly inexcusable; without having any degree of apology for themselves, from the doctrine of particular redemption.—For all the particularity that takes place in the doctrine of redemption, strikes against none in the way of their entertaining any concern about salvation through Christ. It has a tremendous aspect upon sinners,—only in the way of their setting at nought all the Lord's counsel, and despising all his reproof. They have the same offers of salvation, with the same invitations to receive and rest upon Christ, that others have: And they cannot pretend that others, who come to Christ and are saved, have any better ground than they to go upon; while others find the same ground to be sufficient, for drawing near in full assurance of faith. Neither can they pretend, that any supposed want of access and warrant, is the reason of their not coming to Christ:

For

For the reason lies in a love of their sinful condition, with enmity against salvation from sin; and against the glorious method of salvation through Christ, in a way of free grace. In a word, they have no shadow of excuse; as if they had found themselves any way debarred from Christ, and left under any necessity of perishing without him: Seeing all their estrangement from Christ is voluntary, or a matter of their free choice; and the tenor of their indictment must be to this effect,—*That they hated knowledge, and did not chuse the fear of the Lord.*

Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure; having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his *. Through every generation in the *visible* Church, the case will be; that while *the rest were blinded, the election hath obtained it* †,—hath obtained a place in the Church *invisible*, of those who are saved.

S E C T. II.

Of the Ordinance of Preaching, as it respects the Members of the invisible Church.

THIS ordinance has a *primary* respect to men as *sinners*, providentially under the dispensation of the gospel in the *visible* Church: But it has a *secondary* respect to men as *saints*, constituted members of the *invisible* Church. It finds them in the state of nature; but is blessed for bringing them into the state of grace: And, as in this state, it is of a *peculiar* suitableness to them. The preaching which is adapted to men as sinners, is of a direct benefit to saints also; as these have still to mind and persevere in their first work, of coming to Christ. And the preaching which is adapted to men as saints, may be occasionally of benefit to sinners also; for begetting in

I i

them

* 2 Tim. ii. 19.

† Rom. xi. 7.

them a concern about attaining to those experiences and exercises, which they hear of others being acquainted with. The preachers of the gospel, have to study a *rightly dividing the word of truth*; to give to the hearers, severally, their *portion of meat in due season* *. As their first business is about the ingathering of sinners; their next business is about the upbuilding of saints, the members of the invisible Church. And,

§ I. The members of the invisible Church, or true Christians, are the Lord's *hidden ones* †; they are so, as in respect of security, so likewise in respect of *secrecy*. The Lord knoweth most particularly who they are, as to all the individuals of them. They may absolutely know themselves to be of that happy number, in their faith of salvation; and when *the Spirit itself beareth witness with their spirits, that they are the children of God* ‡: Though they are often much in the dark on this subject. But others about them cannot know them with *absolute certainty*, to be such persons: Nor can preachers of the gospel distinguish them particularly from others, with a certain knowledge of them, as objects of their peculiar address in that dispensation.

But it is certain, that there are always such persons in the visible Church; that the succession of them in it can never fail, where the truths and ordinances of Christ are properly dispensed. Christ has always *a seed to serve him*; he will without any interruption, have some to *fear him as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations* ||. And the preachers of the gospel are warranted to consider all persons as such, who bear a credible appearance
of

* 2 Tim. ii. 15.; Luke xii. 42.

† Psal. lxxxiii. 3.

‡ Rom. viii. 16.

|| Psal. xxii. 30.; lxxii. 5.

of being so,—in respect of their Christian knowledge and conversation.

§ II. The apostolical preaching was certainly conformed to the apostolical epistles. And these are peculiarly addressed to the members of the invisible Church, or to true Christians as such: *To the saints, sanctified in Christ Jesus; saints, and faithful brethren in Christ; begotten again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ; having obtained like precious faith with the Apostles themselves.* All this is so evident in the front of most of these epistles, that it needs not be ascertained by particular quotations.

With persons of such characters the Apostles had principally ado, in the churches then established; which were gathered into a church-state, through the primary exercise of their commission to *preach the gospel to every creature.* The profession of Christianity was not then the prevailing fashion; men had seldom any selfish interest to be served by it; and they were exposed to manifold sufferings on account of it: So that the Churches were then, almost wholly, composed of persons who bore a credible appearance of being Christians indeed.—And this apostolical example is a standing rule, for preaching the gospel with a peculiar address to the members of invisible Church.

§ III. The preaching of the gospel is to be so addressed to them, in a manner suited to their peculiar state; for their *instruction in righteousness*: As a mean which the Lord doth bless for promoting their spiritual knowledge, experience and exercise; their growth in grace and knowledge; and for building them up in their most holy faith,—*till they all come,*

in

in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man; unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ *. They are thus to be fed and nourished, confirmed and comforted; and guarded against all errors prevailing in their time. The apostolical writings do richly abound, in examples and directions, for that peculiar dispensation of the gospel to true Christians; upon which it is not needful to enlarge in this place.

§ IV. The ordinance of preaching is especially concerned with the members of the invisible Church, to fortify them against temptations; as also to give them proper reproof and correction,—with regard to any errors which they may be seduced into, and whatever misapprehensions of truth or duty they may entertain. They are likewise to be thereby instructed about, and excited unto their Christian work and warfare: That their *conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ, that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things; that they which have believed in God, be careful to maintain good works* †. They are to be taught, that as they have betaken themselves to the righteousness of Christ, for the justification of their persons through faith in him; so they should study a justification of their *faith* by their good works, to *show their faith by their works*,—as *faith without works is dead* ‡.

An immediate preaching up of moral duties is wholly unscriptural, and quite vain; otherwise than in being addressed to persons, considered as members of the invisible Church. Gospel hearers should be called to the performance of duties, only in the way of betaking themselves to Christ by faith, as the first of all their duties; for deliverance in him, from the law

* Eph. iv. 13. † Phil. i. 27.; Tit. ii. 10; iii. 8.

‡ James ii. 18. 26.

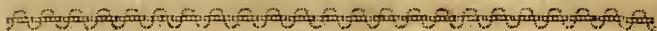
law as a *Covenant of Works*: Taking up their dependence before God for justification, upon his fulfilling of that law as a Covenant; and upon his grace, for enabling them to study holiness in all manner of conversation,—according to that law as a rule of righteousness in sanctification, and under a sweet constraint of his love.—All other preaching up of duties, is but a calling people to *establish their own righteousness* *; and a calling them to what is absolutely impracticable. It is an amusing of them with fancies about good works which can never be realized; and a promoting of their natural opposition to the gospel of Christ, unto their eternal perdition.

§ V. The ordinance of preaching is especially concerned with the members of the invisible Church, as persons *redeemed from the earth*; in calling them from earth to heaven: That, as *risen with Christ*, they should *seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God*,—that they should *set their affection on things above, not on things on the earth*: Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ †. They are to be dealt with for confessing, in their exercise and behaviour, *that they are strangers and pilgrims on the earth*; and therefore, to have their *conversation in heaven* ‡. They are to be cautioned against earthliness, and called unto heavenliness of mind: Pressing forward through the militant, toward the triumphant state of the Church.—Thus it is, that the Gospel-ministry must carry them to death's door; leaving them there in Christ's hand, for ever. And so, the *Covenant of Grace* comes to have its full *accomplishment in time*; with
regard

* Rom. x. 3. † Rev. xiv. 3; Col. iii. 1, 2.; Tit. ii. 13.

‡ Heb. xi. 13.; Phil. iii. 20.

regard to the souls of those for whom it was *established from eternity*.



P E R I O D III.

Of the Effect of the Covenant of Grace through Eternity.

THOUGH the Covenant of Works had not been broken, this world must have come to an end of its temporal state; but such as we can have no particular conception of. The succession of times, seasons, generations, events and revolutions which belong to it in that state,—could not have been for ever. Man was not, yea could not be designed for an eternity of animal life; to be debarred for ever from all immediate enjoyment of God, or otherwise than through the intervention of animal enjoyments and exercises.—Had all mankind been left to perish in the state of sin and misery, this world must have come to a most horrible end; by the powerful and unmixed vengeance of God. But it must have stood through a course of time, in such a condition as could serve for the propagation of mankind; till all the *children of wrath* should be brought forth.—Under the Covenant of Grace, this world is hastening to an end; but an end, with regard to mankind, of a very mixed nature: The *Justice* of God then to shine forth in all its glory, to the full and everlasting perdition of those under the broken Covenant of Works; and the *Grace* of God then to shine

shine forth in all its glory, to the full and everlasting salvation of those under the Covenant of Grace*.

Such will be the most dreadful and desirable events of the great day, the last and greatest of all days; when the sun, moon and stars, shall have finished their courses: *When the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up* †.

JESUS CHRIST, the Son of God, and the son of man,—will then come in his glory; *in the glory of his Father with all the holy angels: Then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and every eye shall see him* ‡. He will make such an appearance in that day, on a great white throne, that *the earth and the heaven shall fly away from his face; and there will be found no place for them* ||: How much less shall the workers of iniquity be able to abide the day of his coming, and to stand when he appeareth!—He will most graciously raise up the bodies of all his people in that day, through a joyful ministry of angels; without suffering any devil to come near their graves: He will fashion them like unto his glorious body, as happily reunited to their souls: which he will bring with him from heaven, for that purpose. By his powerful voice, the bodies of all the other dead will be judicially raised, amidst a swarm of devils; unto a horrible reunion with their souls, then brought from hell: *And before him shall be gathered all nations* §.

In the day appointed for these greatest of all events, *He will judge the world in righteousness* **: When a full and final decision will be made on his side, of all controversies that were ever stated against his interests; so that Atheists and Deists, and all blasphemers

* Part I. Chap. I. Sect. V. Inf. I. † 2 Pet. iii. 10.

‡ Mark viii. 38.; Matth. xxv. 31.; Rev. i. 7.

|| Rev. xx. 11. § Matth. xxv. 32. ** Acts xvii. 31.

blasphemers of the glorious THREE-IN-ONE, with all the enemies of truth and duty,—will stand in a state of self-condemnation before him. He will judge devils and wicked men, in all the glory of his mediatory person: Though that will not be properly a mediatory work; as no mediation could be requisite, for procuring their deserved judgment to condemnation. But he will have a glorious mediatory work, in the judging of his own people; *when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe* *: As they shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted by him, in that day.

The Scripture-testimony, upon all this high subject, could afford great enlargements; which are not thought proper to be made here. The issue of the whole will be,—that the wicked will *go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal* †. And it is the special intention at present,—to consider the Effect of the Covenant of Grace in heaven for ever, after the judgment of the great day; with regard to both CHRIST and *Christians*.

S E C T. I.

Of the Effect of the Covenant of Grace through Eternity, with regard to CHRIST.

§ I. JESUS CHRIST will sit upon the throne of his glory for ever, in all the truth of *manhood* as well as of *Godhead*: He will be ever the same in his mediatory person, *God-man*; but how marvellously changed from what he once was,—in the manger, on the cross, in the sepulchre! He carried his humanity to heaven in the view of his disciples; no way dropped it when he ascended, as *Elijah* did his mantle: And the *same Jesus*, in the same humanity, will come again at the last

* 2 Thess. i. 10.

† Matth. xxv. 46.

last day; so as *every eye shall see him*. He will then return to heaven, with all his redeemed company, to *dwell among them* for ever; as still the same Jesus, inhabiting their nature. From his love to them which passeth knowledge, he loved their nature unto that assumption of it; and this wonderful love can never admit of his separating himself from it or them. He will have the same account to give of himself to them for ever, that he once gave of himself to the Apostle John: I am *he that liveth* (essentially *the living one*), *and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore* *,—evermore, as having still the same manhood in which he was once dead. He took possession of the throne when he ascended; as *Jesus of Nazareth*; a character which belongs to him, only as in human nature,—never to be ashamed of his former meanness in it: And what he now is upon the throne, he ever will be; *the man Christ Jesus* †. He will thus appear, through eternity, in the highest glory of his constitutional name, IMMANUEL, *God with us*; with us, in our nature: With all the redeemed in heaven for ever, as his brethren in the same nature.

He will ever be, in the midst of the throne, *a Lamb as it had been slain* ‡: A character which belongs to him only in manhood, in which he had once made a sacrifice of himself. And it would seem that his glorious body in heaven, through eternity, will retain the marks of his crucifixion. How this may be, we cannot conceive: But it is certain, that he appeared to his disciples with these marks, in his glorified body as risen from the dead ||. There is no signification in Scripture, as if the martyrs of Jesus would thus retain any marks of what they had suffered in their bodies: As their sufferings had no merit in them; these no way belong to the ground of

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their

* Rev. i. 18.

† Acts xxii. 8.: 1 Tim. ii. 5.

‡ Rev. v. 6.

|| Luke xxiv. 39, 40.; John xx. 27.

their place and standing in heaven. But the glorified state of human nature in the person of Christ, and the presence of the redeemed with him in heaven,—must all depend for ever upon his sufferings in that nature. How fit and ravishing is it then, that these should be for ever exhibited in the very form of his mediatory person!

And though the infinite glory of his Godhead was once veiled by his manhood, it will not be so in heaven: It will shine forth, without any obstruction, through his glorious body; to the astonished perception of human eyes. The glory of all the divine perfections, the infinitely diffusive rays of all that glory, will be concentrated in the person *God-man*; as come down into a most wonderful nearness to redeemed men, of most wonderful perceptibility by them.

§ II. JESUS CHRIST will sit on his throne for ever, in the fullest glory of his *prophetical office*. He will retain his mediatory state in heaven through eternity; as inseparable from the retaining of his manhood: And, particularly, he will continue for ever in the office of a *Prophet*. There will be no occasion then for such exercise of it as now, by either outward or inward revelation. But the perpetuity of knowledge, light and sight among the redeemed, will depend upon his continued influence in that office. From hence only, they will continue to be *filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding* *. He will shine forth among them as the *Sun of Righteousness*, for ever in his meridian glory: And the continuance of the glorious light in them, will depend upon their being ever filled with emanations of light from him; so that a failure of these for one moment, would leave them in utter dark-

* Col. i. 9.

darkness. But *there shall be no night there*, in the heavenly Jerusalem; for *the glory of God will lighten it, and the Lamb shall be the light thereof* *. From that everlasting influence of his prophetic office, each of the redeemed will have to say through eternity, in a far higher strain than they could ever do in time,—*The LORD is my light, and my salvation.*

§ III. JESUS CHRIST will sit on his throne for ever, in the fullest glory of his *priestly office*. He will not cease, in the eternal state, more than now, to be a *priest upon his throne* †. The full atonement which he formerly made, and the everlasting righteousness which he then brought in,—are what he will for ever be making a glorious exhibition of, on behalf of all the redeemed; as the whole ground of their admission into heaven, and everlasting continuance there. That former exercise of his priesthood on earth, will never be out of their eye; nor will they ever claim any other holding for eternal life: Saying to him, in a continued song of praise,—*Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood* ‡. As it is upon the permanent virtue of his priestly office, finally exercised on earth in the shedding of his precious blood, that their heavenly state will depend for ever; so this will be through a perpetuity of his *intercession* for them: Every moment of their continuance in heaven, as well as their first access into it, must depend immediately upon the unceasing permanence of of his glorious say; *Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory* ||.

§ IV. JESUS CHRIST will sit on his throne for ever, in the fullest glory of his *kingly office*. As he hath an *essential* kingdom now, in the dispensations of

* Rev. xxi. 23.; xxii. 5.

† Rev. v. 9.

‡ Zech. vi. 13.

|| John xvii. 24.

of Providence; he hath likewise a *mediatory kingdom*, in the dispensations of grace: And this kingdom will endure for ever, when grace shall be perfected in glory. This is *an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away; his kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: It shall stand for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end* *. When the Father constituted him a mediatory King, it was with this assurance,—*Thy throne, O God, is for ever, and ever* †. As Mediator, he has *all power given to him; not only in earth, but likewise in heaven*: And this gift can never be revoked, or abolished. He will therefore reign for ever in heaven, as the *King of saints*; the immediate object of all their homage and obedience. When the state of eternal glory takes place,—as *the throne of God*, so likewise *of the Lamb*, shall be in it; and *his servants shall serve him* ‡.

Then indeed,—*he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father* ||: Giving a most full and faithful account of all the administration of his mediatory kingdom in the state of grace; so that he will then have to say, about his work of application, as formerly about his work of purchase,—*It is finished*. And he will then present unto the Father, the completed state of his mediatory kingdom, in the whole glorified body of his redeemed subjects; saying,—*Behold I, and the children whom the Lord hath given me* §. His mediatory kingdom, in all the *gracious state*, or gracious form and administration of it, will thus be at an end for ever.—*And then shall the Son be subject to him that put all things under him*. He had been so before, during the gracious state of his mediatory kingdom; and he shall then still be so, after delivering up that state of his kingdom to the Father. Yet this he never could nor can be, as the

SON;

* Dan. ii. 44; vii. 14.; Luke i. 33.

† Psal. xlv. 6.

‡ Rev. xxii. 3. || 1 Cor. xv. 24, 28.

§ Isa. viii. 18.

SON; for, in this respect, he is necessarily the sam^e in substance with the Father,—equal in power and in glory. But he shall then be *subject*, only in the sense of *mediatory subordination*; which therefore shall endure for ever, in the perfect and permanent glory of all his mediatory offices. The only *subjection* which can be meant in this place, consistently with his supreme Godhead,—is an unanswerable argument for the eternity of his mediatory state and kingdom in heaven.—And God shall be *all in all*: The Godhead, in the persons of the Father and Son and Spirit, peculiarly manifested in the person of the Mediator,—shall be the immediate fountain of *all* blessedness in *all* the redeemed; without any further intervention of means or ordinances.

§ V. JESUS CHRIST will sit on his throne for ever. as an object of worship to all his blessed creatures in heaven. That edict which God the Father published, at bringing the *first-begotten into the world*, has not, nor ever will be recalled; *Let all the angels of God worship him* *. If he was an object of worship to angels, amidst all the meanness of his humbled estate: he must more eminently be so, as he is now glorified. There will be for ever, *round about the throne, the voice of many angels*,—in number *ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands*; saying with a loud voice,—*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive* (in worshipping ascriptions) *power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing*: They will ever *fall before the throne on their faces, and worship God* in manhood upon that throne †. Instead of envying, they will be ever applauding the sovereignty of grace,—in the exaltation of a nature, originally much inferior to theirs, unto a far superior and

* Heb. i. 6.

† Rev. v. 11, 12.; vii. 11.

and inconceivable state of glory in the person of Christ.

But, in a special manner, all the redeemed will be for ever worshipping *the Lamb in the midst of the throne*; they will ever *fall down and worship him, casting their crowns before the throne*, in the deepest and most joyful adoration: Their everlasting song of worship will be,—*Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; and hath redeemed us to God, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation; to him be glory and dominion, for ever and ever. Amen**. This will be an immediate worship, in their direct beholding of him, no more through a vail of means or ordinances: And an unceasing worship, without any weariness; in a perfection of degrees, as well as of parts.—Such will ever be the infinite glory, and honour, and blessedness of JESUS CHRIST, as Mediator: The very same person who was once a man of sorrows and acquainted with griefs; who had once hung most ignominiously, as well as painfully, upon the cross!

S E C T. II.

Of the Effect of the Covenant of Grace through Eternity with regard to Christians.

MANY nominal Christians will have no place in the heavenly state: But all true Christians, who were of old elected to eternal life, will be there for ever,—without an exception of one; in a state of eternal glory.

However far the bodies of all those will then be *spiritual*, they will not absolutely cease to be *material*: And such material beings, in a glorified condition, must have a material residence; filled with a
perfect

* Rev. i. 5, 6.; iv. 10.; v. 8, 9, 14.

perfect light of the divine glory.—This residence is variously set forth in Scripture. It is called *new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness: The city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem*; a city which was represented to the Apostle John, in characters of most singular and amazing glory: *A house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*. Yet how far these accounts are to be taken in a literal, or how far in a figurative sense, cannot now be determined: And this whole matter is too inconceivable by mortals, for presuming to deal in any particular conjectures about it.—But that land of promise, that city of the living God, that heavenly house, *such as it shall prove to be*,—will be for ever filled with glorious inhabitants of redeemed mankind. And we may observe, that,

§ I. They will be for ever above, in a state of glorious *perfection*.—When Jesus Christ, descending from heaven, shall fulfil his gracious undertaking to raise them at the last day; the body of each will be raised *in incorruption, in glory, in power*: It will be raised *a spiritual body*, such as we cannot now conceive of; never more to be any encumbrance to the soul, in its most spiritual employments: *For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality* *. He will thus *change* their *vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body*; in the highest state of perfection that matter can admit of †. There is a great difference of glory in *celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial*; *there is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars* ‡: Yet all this is as nothing, to the vast difference betwixt the bodies of saints in their
moral

* 1 Cor. xv. 42, 43, 44, 53.

† Phil. i. 21.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 40, 41.

mortal state,—and the same bodies in the state of glory.

But, especially, their souls will then be in state of glorious perfection; all the capacities or faculties thereof will be enlarged in all, as much as their finite natures can admit of. The soul taken to heaven from the womb will be no way inferior, in this respect, to that which was released from the body in the ripest years: *For the child shall die an hundred years old* *. They will all *see face to face*, fully qualified for that sight; and *shall all know, even as also they are known* †: Than which there can be nothing higher, in creature-capacity and attainment.

Then *that which is perfect will come*: For the *spirits of just men* will then be finally *made perfect*, in reunion with their glorified bodies ‡. There are great differences among them in their state of grace; as in the society of infants, children, and men of full age: But then they will all be *come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ* ||; which must be the same stature in all. And then *shall the righteous, all and each, shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father* §.

Their *justification* and *adoption* are perfect in their state of grace, equally so with all,—as to the real nature of these high privileges; though very often much out of sight. But all of them will equally enjoy a perfect and most blissful apprehension thereof in their heavenly state: Each having a most ravishing sense of their full acceptance in the favour of God, with the highest endearments of children.—And they will all be perfect, all equally so, in their *sanctification*: As all made *like Christ*, when they *shall see him as he is; holy and without blame before God in love,*

* Isa. lxx. 20.

† 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

‡ 1 Cor. xiii. 10.; Heb. xii. 23.

|| Eph. iv. 13.

§ Matth. xiii. 43.

love,—not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; all equally walking with him in white raiment *.

They will then be *made kings and priests unto God*: —*Kings*; partaking in Christ's glorious dominion over all his and their enemies, as all of them will be raised up to *sit with him on his throne*: And *Priests*, in an eternal ministry of thank-offerings, on the ground of the peace-offering which he made of himself †.

Their heavenly glory is represented in figurative terms; by way of allusion to the highest matters of earthly glory. They will be made to *inherit the kingdom prepared for them*: They will receive *a crown of life, a crown of glory*; as in a most glorious and triumphant state of eternal life: And *a crown of righteousness*; all appearing in the full glory of the mediatory righteousness put upon them, as meritorious of all their triumphant life ‡. And as it is the same kingdom that all will enjoy, it must be the same crown that all will wear; because the crown of mediatory righteousness, comprehending the whole, is but one and the same to all.

Such will be their state of perfection, in respect of both capacity and enjoyment: So that Christ will then *be glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe*; as all brought to *appear with him in glory, glorified together* ||. Every overcomer in the Christian warfare *shall inherit all things, in him as heir of all things; they shall reign for ever and ever* §. —The glorious perfection of each in that state will exclude all deficiency: And, if it could admit of any addition in the same kind, it would not be perfection.

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* 1 John iii. 2.; Eph. i. 4.; v. 27.; Rev. iii. 5.

† Rev. i. 6.; v. 10.; iii. 21.

‡ Matth. xxv. 34.; Rev. ii. 10.; 1 Pet. v. 4.; 2 Tim. iv. 8.

|| 2 Thess. ii. 10.; Col. iii. 4.; Rom. viii. 17.

§ Rev. xxi. 7.; xxii. 5.

Each of the redeemed will then, in the high sense of that Scripture, *be filled with all the fulness of God*; they will have a full enjoying of God, entering *into the joy of their Lord*: And God will be *all in all*; *all*, not less or more in some, but the same *in all* *. If David had to say, in his gracious enjoyment, *My cup runneth over*; much more will each of the redeemed have to say so, in their enjoyment of glory;—when they shall be blessed with incomprehensible *fulness of joy*; not simply entering into them, but they into it: As God will still be *able to do exceeding abundantly*, in the experience of each, above the widest compass of their thoughts †.

It must therefore belong to their perfection, the *running over* of their cup,—that the enjoyment and glory of each should not only equal, but exceed his own conception. Could one conceive of another as superior to him in the same kind, then his conception would be wider than his own attainment; which could not consist with perfection in that attainment: And there can be no place in heaven for this direction and duty belonging to the state of grace; Let your *conversation be without covetousness*, and be *content with such things as ye have*,—*not envying one another* ‡.

As to the orders of angels mentioned in Scripture,—if these do not only mean their different ranks of employment as ministering spirits; it would seem, that the same must refer to a difference in their *natures*: For were they of different orders in the same nature or kind, they could not all be perfect in that kind. But the redeemed are all of the same nature; and will be for ever employed in the same glorious ministry.

There

* Eph. iii. 19.; Matth. xxv. 21. 23.; 1 Cor. xv. 28.

† Psal. xxiii. 5.; xvi. 11.; Eph. iii. 20.

‡ Heb. xiii. 5.; Gal. v. 26.

There can be no place in heaven, for the Popish imagination upon this subject; that the proportions of the merit of good works, of usefulness and attainments on earth,—will entitle unto and obtain proportionable rewards in heaven. For no creature-merit can be pleaded or acknowledged there. All that saints were and had and did of any good on earth, was all of mere grace; they made not themselves to differ: And eternal life, as fully enjoyed in heaven, will be wholly *the gift of God* *. The rich grace of God, mere grace, will ever be celebrated in heaven; as the original of all their glory. Saints who were of very different sizes when on earth, but all come to the stature of the fulness of Christ in heaven,—will be falling equally down, as it were flat upon their faces, before the throne; ascribing all their place, and blessedness, and glory,—to the free grace of God, and of the Lamb that was slain.

§ II. They will be for ever above, in a state of glorious *union with Christ*.—There is a most wonderful union between Christ and them, in their state of grace. He and they are *legally* one: They are sustained, when brought into the state of justification, as one with him, in the eye of the law of the Covenant of Works; as having served and suffered under that law, to the farthest extent of its precepts and penalty, in him as their representing head.—And they are *spiritually* one with him, in their state of regeneration; which is indeed *a great mystery*: He and they are *one spirit*; they are *one body*, of which he is the head and they the members: They are in him, as the branches are in the vine; and he *liveth* in them, as they also live in them,—mutually and mysteriously in each other †. Nor is this union between

* Rom. vi. 23.

† Eph. v. 30, 32.; 1 Cor. vi. 17.; xii. 12.; John xv. 1,—5.; Gal. ii. 20.

tween Christ and them dissolved by their death; when that between their souls and bodies is so: The union is then made perfect, as to their souls; and their bodies, as constituent parts of Christ-mystical, are still united to him in their graves.

But it is in heaven, that this union will be brought to its full glory. There it is, that Christ will most eminently and for ever appear as the head of the Church triumphant; *his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all* *. Their life of grace is wholly from him as the true vine, their living head; separated from which, they would immediately die: And their life of glory will also be so for ever; all immediately from their union with him, securing a perpetual influx of his glorious life into them. Then will be a glorious verification of his word in heaven, which was graciously verified on earth; *he that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me and I in him* *.

This union with Christ will be for ever, indissoluble. The glorious head never will nor can be separated from his glorified body; and it never will nor can be separated from him. The temple of heaven could not stand without him, as filling it with his glorious presence: And it could not stand without them as monumental pillars, eternal monuments of free grace in that temple †. They will be so secured in their union with him, and with the Three-One-God in him,—that they could not lose their place in heaven, more than he could do so: He cannot lose any thing of his own *fulness*, which they will be for ever.

As hath been observed,—Christ will then be *glorified in his saints, and admired in all them that believe*. As they will be ever *in him*, their head of righteousness and life; he will be ever *in them*, unto a most striking

* Eph. i. 22, 23. † John vi. 46. ‡ Rev. iii. 12.

striking manifestation of his glory through them.—In their state of grace, according to the measure and exercise thereof, each carries out a light and favour of Christ to the observation of others; as the face of *Moses* shined, by a derivation from the divine glory, when he came down from the mount. But all this was only a faint dawning of that glorious manifestation which will be made of Christ in each of the redeemed; when he shall be for ever *glorified and admired*, not only as in himself, but likewise in them,—who will then have the *name of God and of the Lamb*, manifested with eternal glory *in their foreheads* *.

§ III. They will be for ever above, in a state of glorious *communion with Christ*.—They have times of sweet communion with him, in their state of grace; though in various degrees, and with various interruptions. For he manifests himself to them, as not unto the world: He sometimes privileges them with a most comfortable sense of his gracious presence and special love; he sometimes speaks words of grace and promise into their hearts, with inexpressible sweetness,—enabling them to pour out their hearts before him; he sometimes fills them *with all joy and peace in believing*.

Yet all this is but an earnest or foretaste of their communion with him in glory; to be enjoyed equally by them all, and without any interruption for ever. They shall then *see him as he is*: And then shall be the full accomplishment of what he had promised; *I will shew you plainly of the Father*. Their immediate sight of the glorified God man, and of the Three-One-God in him,—with their capacity for bearing that sight, without being any way confounded by it; all this we are now to believe, but cannot comprehend.

There

* Rev. xxii. 3, 4.

There will be an eternity of communication between Christ and them.—They will have an inconceivable blessedness of entertainment from him; set forth under this figurative promise, *ye shall eat and drink at my table in my kingdom: So the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes* *. He will be for ever filling and satiating them with infinite good, even an influx of his own fulness; with manifestations of his own glory, and sheddings abroad of his love through their whole souls.—And they will be for ever pouring out their whole souls in love to him as their *all in all*: With rapturous singing of him as *theirs*; and of them as *not their own*, but brought into a state of eternal life by the price of his life for them,—*redeemed unto God by his blood*.

There will be many bodily mouths in heaven; Jesus, and each of the redeemed, will have such a mouth for ever: And we are not to suppose, that any of these mouths will be shut or unused; while they will be of use only for speaking, in a language we cannot now conceive of. And we may well suppose, that the sweetest intercourses of language will take place between him and them.

There will be no use or occasion in heaven, for that blessed book called the *Bible*: While the perfection of the heavenly state will admit of no forgetfulness,—as to any gracious things which holy men of God had once spoken, moved by the Holy Ghost. And all the Bible-mysteries about the Covenant of Grace, will then be fully opened up; unto a being far otherwise understood than now: As an everlasting subject of language, between Christ and the redeemed.—He entertained his disciples with a long and most affectionate discourse, the same night in
which

* Luke xxii. 30.; Rev. vii. 17.

which he was betrayed; on which occasion he said to them,—*I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now* *: And these many things he said to them afterwards, during their Apostolic ministry, when made able to bear the same. But a far higher capacity for bearing all that Christ will be for ever saying in a far higher strain, will take place with all the redeemed in heaven: And they will be for ever blessed with a hearing of his voice; saying over all these things to them, after such a manner as none of them could have borne in their mortal state.

And we may well suppose, that there will be the sweetest returns of language on their part: That he and they will have an unceasing interchange of glorious speaking; conformable to what had passed between him and them in their state of grace.—None of them will have to say, as once, *save me*; being then fully saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: But each of them will have to say, when looking up to him upon the throne, *I am thine*. And each will have the most ravishing return from him; *I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine*.

§ IV. They will be for ever above, in a state of glorious *communion with one another*.—They are brought into a state of gracious union and communion on earth; they are gathered together in one, united to Christ as their Covenant-head and Husband,—into one fold, as his sheep; into one Church; into one mystical body: So that they, *being many, are one body in Christ; and every one members one of another* †. From this union, beside their public communion in the Church-state, they have a private communion or fellowship of religious intercourse,—yet now very limited; confined to particular and small

* John xvi. 12.

† Rom. xii. 5.

small circles, according to their providential connection and acquaintance: In which fellowship they have sweet conferences about Christ and soul-concerns; with joint addresses to him in prayer.

But their spiritual communion will be gloriously extended and advanced in heaven. There, they will enjoy a full effect of Christ's intercession concerning them; as expressed in words which bear a much higher meaning than we can now understand: *That they all may be one in us, as thou Father art in me and I in thee; that they also may be one in us* *. And the communion resulting from such a union, as well as the other glories of the heavenly state which have been spoken of,—can be but very imperfectly understood by any, during their earthly state; when, at best, as to these matters,—one can but speak as a child, and understand as a child, and think as a child: Yet such accounts of them are to be gathered, or reasonably inferred from the holy Scriptures, as may suffice for some endearing prospect thereof,—till *that which is perfect is come* †.

From

* John xvii. 21.

† 1 Cor. xiii. 10, 11.

† The Scriptures testify,—that *God will bring every work in to judgment, with every secret thing; whether it be good, or whether it be evil: And that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment: And that then God shall judge the secrets of men, and bring upon them the fruit of their thoughts: And that we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* And it is essential to the character of the just Judge,—that he will be *justified when he speaketh, clear when he judgeth*; justified and cleared, as to the truth and equity of his judgment, in the conviction of those judged: That their mouths will be stopped, without any excuse; *self-condemned*, by the testimony of their own consciences,—as to every, even the minutest particulars, of those matters for which they will be condemned by him. The *books* will then be *opened*; and it is not questioned, that of these

the

From the perfection of their state, and the intimacy of their union,—we may well suppose, that there will be no unacquaintance among the individuals of the redeemed in heaven: That the particularities of their acquaintance on earth, instead of being extinguished, will be improved; but that it will likewise extend, without any confinement, through the nations of them which are saved,—though in a manner far above our present apprehensions.

The first man, from the perfection of his original knowledge, immediately discerned the formation and character of the first woman; though he had been in a deep sleep, when she was formed out of him. *Moses* and *Elias*, on the mount of transfiguration, carried out a direct evidence of who they were,—even to the eyes of mortal disciples; who appeared not to have asked, as not needing to ask, any information upon that subject. And much more, we may suppose, all the saved people who shall meet in heaven will have a direct and satisfying knowledge of one another,—even of those whose existence they never knew till meeting there; without one needing to enquire concerning another, who he is. What a glorious acquaintance and intimacy must thus take

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place,

the book of *conscience* is one. It is peculiar to his judgment,—that he condemns none, without a witness in themselves to those things for which he condemns them: None will be capable of pretending innocence or ignorance, as to any of the thoughts or words or deeds for which they will be condemned.

All this must infer a most wonderful, and to us (now) an incredible-like power of memories and consciences in the day of judgment; with regard to every thing which had passed within men, and had been said and done by them, as to both matter and manner,—from their first exercise of reason, to their death!

May not then all the particularities of knowledge, recollections and intercourses, now ascribed to the saints in heaven,—be reasonably inferred from their *perfection*; and from their *unity* among themselves, as *all one* in Christ?

place, among all those who will then be most perfectly one in Christ *!

And there will be for ever a sweet, a rapturous communication of language among them. The glorified Jesus, the Lamb in the midst of the throne,—will be the peculiar and everlasting subject of their discourse: While each of them, looking up to him, will have to sing, in a far higher strain than ever they could do on earth; *My beloved is mine, and I am his!* Nothing will be forgotten among them, of all the words of grace and promise which had been given to them on earth; particularly, such as had been savingly blessed to them in their several experiences. David had said to the Lord, and had said it as an example of his fellow-saints,—*I will not forget thy word; I will remember the works of the Lord; Surely I will remember thy wonders of old:* And all that vowed remembrance of his word, his works, his wonders,—must certainly be brought to perfection in heaven, without any forgetfulness thereof for ever!

Most

* In our present state, we can judge nothing about the nature of that *knowledge* which will take place in heaven. With regard to God,—the redeemed will *see face to face*, and *know even as also they are known*; an attainment of which we can now form no particular conception. With regard to one another, for any thing that we can judge, each may someway have a direct or intuitive apprehension of others, as to who and whence they are; with all their concerns of their introduction into the state of grace,—and of the Lord's manifold ways of carrying them forward in it, through the wilderness of this world, till their arrival in the heavenly *Canaan*. This implies no absurdity, nor any inconsistency with Scripture, but may rather be inferred from its account of the *perfection* in heaven. And it is no farther above our comprehension, than what the Scripture testifies about their knowledge of God: For, when so wonderfully manifesting himself,—he can most easily and immediately lay all these things open to them, as parts of his own works and ways; for their being in a perfect capacity to praise him about one another, as well as severally about themselves.

Most ravishing and inexhaustible themes of discourse, they will thus have in heaven; about all God's gracious words and works and wonders,—now set forth in the Bible: About the glorious persons in the eternal Godhead; about all the councils of the divine will and wisdom from eternity, as all laid open in a glorious completion of the whole; about the wonderful person of Christ, and all his salvation; about the Covenant of Grace,—in its establishment, accomplishment, and effect; about all the ways and wonders of God's providence, then fully unravelled;—especially about all his works of grace in the Church; and his gracious dealings with each of them, in their generations! Of all which themes they will then have a quite other comprehension, than they ever had in their state of grace.

§ V. They will be for ever above, in a state of glorious *employment*. Some declaration hereof was made, in the view which hath been already given of the glories of their heavenly state.—They will never have any vacancy of employment in that state. They will then indeed *rest from their labours*, from all such toilsome work as in their earthly state; from all those services and exercises, often under much heaviness, which were peculiar to their course of pilgrimage. Yet then *they rest not day and night*, an earthly way of expressing the most incessant activity; through that inconceivable eternity, which will contain no succession of such periods. But there will never be any weariness in that employment; they will be ever fresh in it, as it will be ever new to them. Variety and vicissitude is essential to any happiness that we can enjoy or conceive of on earth; but this is owing to the imperfection which lies in the nature of all temporal enjoyments and exertions. When *that which is perfect is come*, in both these respects;

respects; it must exclude all existence, with all ideas, of any varieties or vicissitudes for ever.

The principal and ultimate employment of the redeemed in heaven, to which all other will be subservient and finally reduced,—will be the worship of everlasting praise to the Three-One-God, in and through the person of the glorious Mediator; they will for ever *praise him in the heights of Zion*. Such as this will be their everlasting language:—*Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints: Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created: Blessing, and honour, and glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne; and to the Lamb for ever and ever: Salvation, and glory, and honour and power to the Lord our God**. And the regions of heaven will resound for ever, with the voices of the redeemed; in most rapturous addresses to one another,—HALLELUJAH, *Praise ye the Lord!*

There was once a *hellish rapture* on earth, which perhaps never had a parallel in this world; when a great multitude *all with one voice, about the space of two hours, cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians*. Strange; that the wicked transport was maintained, that their spirits and voices were got so kept up,—*about the space of two hours!*—But this *heavenly rapture* will continue quite unabated for EVER and EVER: *Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised, and his greatness is unsearchable:—O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that feared thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trusted in thee, before the sons of men†*.

The redeemed will have infinite matter of praise,
of

* Rev. xv. 3.; iv. 11.; v. 13.; xix. 1.

† Psal. cxlv. 3.; xxxi. 19.

of a nature *common* to them all. But they will also have *special* matter of praise, all of them severally; each for himself. They will then be respectively employed in an eternal and wondering review of all the Lord's peculiar dealings with them; through all the days of their pilgrimage: Nothing will ever escape their remembrance and observation, as to his providential disposals of them and concerning them on earth; and, especially, as to all his gracious procedure with them,—in beginning, carrying on, and perfecting the good work in their souls. Each will have to tell one another, what the Lord hath done for his soul; but will, especially, be telling it all over to God, in holy rapture,—*to the praise of the glory of his grace*.—Some will also have to praise him, for the use which he had been pleased to make of their ministry in the Church; while others will have their benefits by that ministry for the matter of their praise*.

And with regard to the manifold matters of their contemplation, or of their communications with one another, both common and special—their views will not terminate on any of these things. They will be taking up the manifestations of the divine glory therein; the enlivening and healing rays of the *Sun of Righteousness*, as having passed forth upon them and through them, in all his ways of grace toward them: And so they will be tracing all up, in thankful praise, to the glorious centre of all their light and life; ascribing all to him as ever in their eye, upon his throne high and lifted up.

None of them will glory in themselves, in their own *understanding* and *knowledge*; in any of their attainments, experiences or exercises. They will then be in a state of perfect compliance with the call; *He that glorieth, let him glory in the LORD*: Or, as it

* Phil. ii. 16, 17.; 1 Thess. ii. 19, 20.

it is in another passage, which ought to be rendered; —*Let him that glorieth glory in this (understanding and knowing me), that I am the LORD; which exercise loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth, (continuing that exercise in heaven according to the state thereof); for in these things I delight, saith the LORD* *.—So it will be, when *the ransomed of the LORD shall* (in the highest sense) *return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: They shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away* †.

CONCLUSION.

SOME exhibition hath been now essayed, of that wonderful COVENANT of GRACE which JEHOVAH made with HIS CHOSEN; in the *establishment* of it from eternity, the *accomplishment* of it in time, and the *effect* of it through eternity. It is the chief of all his ways; of his eternal councils, and temporal dispensations: To have a full effect in heaven for ever; as the sure foundation of eternal life and glory and gloriation, among the nations of them which are saved,—the great subject of their eternal admiration and praise, as filling heaven with the infinite and amiable glory of free grace.

But inconceivably different and opposite will be the everlasting effect of the broken *Covenant of Works*, —upon all who die under it; filling hell with the dreadful and spotless glory of vindictive justice. They will then be sunk to an unfathomable depth of misery, under most woful extremities of want and torment, in regions of absolute and endless night; without any hope of alteration or alleviation,—for EVER and EVER and EVER. At the same time, these who die under the *Covenant of Grace* will be
advanced

* 1 Cor. i. 31.; Jer. ix. 24.

† Isa. xxxiv. 10.

advanced to an inconceivable height of happiness in realms of absolute and endless day ; to a full enjoying of all good, in God himself : Without any fear of alteration or abatement in their blessedness,—for EVER and EVER and EVER.

How overwhelming, to a finite mind, is the thought of ETERNITY in these opposite conditions : A perpetual and invariable state of duration, the beginning of which is ever present ; so that no alteration or end of it, at any imaginable distance, ever approaches ! How confounding is the thought of such duration, in extremity of woe ; but how ravishing in extremity of happiness !

Infinitely then doth it concern all, to be taking hold of God's *Covenant of Grace* by faith, while now they have an opportunity for doing so ; as the only way of flying from the wrath to come : The only way of departing from hell beneath ; and of being exalted, upon the infallible ground of the Redeemer's righteousness, to a state of everlasting happiness and glory in heaven.

SACRED



SACRED CONTEMPLATIONS:

PART THIRD.

A

V I E W

O F T H E

ABSOLUTE AND IMMEDIATE

DEPENDENCE OF ALL THINGS ON GOD:

IN A DISCOURSE CONCERNING

LIBERTY and NECESSITY.

For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

ROM. xi. 36.

*O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas!
Terrarum cœlique sator! qui tempus ab ævo
Ire jubes; stabilisque manens das cuncta moveri!
Quem non externæ pepulerunt fingere causæ,
Materiæ fluitantis opus!*

BOETIUS.

[IN ENGLISH.]

O thou who rul'st, with wise and pow'rful sway,
The worlds of earth and heaven, night and day,
Thine handyworks! Who, ever since begun,
Still callest time his daily course to run!
Who, still immoveable, dost all things move;
Both on the earth, and in the heav'ns above!
Whom no external causes did impel,
The mighty work to make and manage well,
Of fluctuating matter!





A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE late Lord KAMES * published a book, about thirty-five years ago,—called, *Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion*; containing an *Essay on Liberty and Necessity*.

In 1763, the Associate Synod inflicted a censure upon one of their preachers; for his obstinate adherence to the doctrine of that essay: “ a doctrine of such *necessity*, as necessarily excludes the consideration of man’s fall and original sin; and contradicts the sovereignty of God’s will, in his eternal decrees, and, universal providence.”

The preacher soon published a *false and abusive libel* against the Synod, on that account: And the present author, a few weeks afterward, published an *Exposition* of this libel.

The following Discourse is extracted from that Exposition; omitting many things which arose from the particular occasion of writing and publishing it: And the extract is cast into a quite new form, with improvements. It refers to the *second edition* of the *Essays*, particularly of that on *Liberty and Necessity*. And it is thought fit for being subjoined to the preceding

* A Lord of Session; as also of *Jusiciary*!

preceding *Contemplations*, in defence thereof. As, according to the principles of that horrid *Essay*, all doctrines about the *Covenants of Works* and *Grace* are mere fictions.

A few years ago, some time before that author's death,—he published a *third edition* of his *Essays*, with his name prefixed; in which the one now referred to has undergone some variations, though none material as to the substance of his scheme. And it cannot be unreasonable that a new exhibition be made of the present antidote, against that renewed attempt to banish Christianity out of this country.

DISCOURSE

0 4

LIBERTY AND NECESSITY.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Infidel-Scheme of Liberty and Necessity.

S E C T. I.

The Infidel-Scheme of Liberty and Necessity explained.

§ I. **A** Summary of that Scheme in the *Essay* referred to, as drawn up by the *Essayer* himself, is in the following terms, viz.

“ Thus far have we advanced in our argument,
 “ that all human actions proceed in a fixed and ne-
 “ cessary train. Man being what he is, a creature
 “ endued with a certain degree of understanding,
 “ certain passions and principles, and placed in cer-
 “ tain circumstances; it is impossible that he should
 “ will or chuse, otherwise than in fact he wills and
 “ chuses. His mind is passive in receiving impres-
 “ sions of things as good or ill: According to these
 impressions,

“ impressions, the last judgment of the understand-
 “ ing is necessarily formed; which the will, if con-
 “ sidered as different from the last judgment of the
 “ understanding, necessarily obeys, as is fully shown:
 “ And the external action is necessarily connected with
 “ the will, or the mind’s final determination to act.”

“ In the course of this reasoning, we have ab-
 “ stracted from all controversies about divine pre-
 “ science and decree; though in fact, from what
 “ hath been proved, it appears that the divine Being
 “ decrees all future events. For he who gave such
 “ a nature to his creatures, and placed them in such
 “ circumstances, as that a certain train of actions
 “ behoved necessarily to follow: He, I say, who did
 “ this, and who must have foreseen the consequences,
 “ did certainly resolve or decree that events should
 “ fall out, and men should act, as they do. Pre-
 “ science indeed is not, properly speaking, any cause
 “ of events. For events do not happen, because
 “ they are foreseen; but because they are certainly
 “ to happen, therefore they are capable of being
 “ foreseen. Though prescience doth not cause, yet
 “ it undoubtedly supposes the certain futurition (as
 “ schoolmen speak) of events. And were there not
 “ causes which render the existence of future events
 “ certain, it would involve a contradiction, to main-
 “ tain that future events could be certainly foreseen.
 “ But I avoid carrying the reader any further into
 “ such thorny disputes.”

“ The sum of what we have discovered, concern-
 “ ing the impression we have of contingency in e-
 “ vents and liberty in actions, is this. Comparing
 “ together the moral and material world, every
 “ thing is as much the result of established laws in
 “ the one as in the other. There is nothing in the
 “ whole universe that can properly be called contin-
 “ gent, that may be, or may not be; nothing loose
 “ and

“ and fluctuating in any part of nature: But every
 “ motion in the material, and every determination
 “ and action in the moral world, are directed by
 “ immutable laws; so that, whilst these laws remain
 “ in force, not the smallest link of the universal
 “ chain of causes and effects can be broken, nor a-
 “ ny thing be otherwise than it is *.”

“ The Deity is the primary cause of all things.
 “ In his infinite mind he formed the great plan of
 “ government, which is carried on by laws fixed
 “ and immutable. These laws produce a regular
 “ train of causes and effects, in the moral as well
 “ as material world; bringing about those events
 “ which are comprehended in the original plan, and
 “ admitting the possibility of none other. This u-
 “ niverse is a vast machine, winded up and set a-go-
 “ ing. The several springs and wheels operate un-
 “ erringly, one upon another. The hand advan-
 “ ceth, and the clock strikes, precisely as the Artist
 “ hath determined. Whoever hath just ideas, and
 “ a true taste of philosophy, will see this to be the
 “ real theory of the universe; and that, upon any
 “ other theory, there can be no general order, no
 “ whole, no plan, no means nor end in its admini-
 “ stration. In this plan, man, a rational creature,
 “ bears his part; and fulfils certain ends for which
 “ he was designed. He must be an actor, and must
 “ act with consciousness and spontaneity. He exer-
 “ cises thought and reason, and his nature is improv-
 “ ed by the due use of these rational powers. Con-
 “ sequently, it is necessary, that he should have
 “ some sense of things possible and contingent, things
 “ depending upon himself to cause; that he may
 “ be led to a proper exercise of that activity for
 “ which he was designed. But, as a sense of neces-
 “ sity would be a perpetual contradiction to the
 “ sense

“ sense of contingency; it was well ordered, that his
 “ being a necessary agent should be hid from him.
 “ To have had his instinctive perceptions, his prac-
 “ tical ideas, formed upon the plan of universal
 “ necessity; to have seen himself a part of that great
 “ machine, winded up and set a-going by the Au-
 “ thor of his nature, would have been inconsistent
 “ with the part that is allotted to him to act *.”

There is a great deal more to this purpose in the *Essay*; and some other extracts from it may be added to what is above, *viz.*

“ Taking a view of the material world, we find
 “ all things there proceeding in a fixed and settled
 “ train of causes and effects.—There is a chain of
 “ causes and effects which hang one upon another,
 “ running through this whole system; and not the
 “ smallest link of the chain can be broken, without
 “ altering the whole constitution of things, or sus-
 “ pending the regular operation of the laws of na-
 “ ture. Here then, in the material world, there
 “ is nothing that can be called *contingent*; nothing
 “ that is left loose; but every thing must be precise-
 “ ly what it is, and be found in that state in which
 “ we find it †.” “ Comparing together the actions
 “ of mind and of matter, similar causes will, in both
 “ equally, produce similar effects ‡.” “ The laws
 “ of action, we say, which respect the human
 “ mind, are as fixed as those which respect mat-
 “ ter. ||.”

“ That motives have some influence in determin-
 “ ing the mind, is certain; that they have this in-
 “ fluence in different degrees, is equally certain.—
 “ Motives being once allowed to have a determining
 “ influence, in any degree; it is easy to suppose
 “ the influence so augmented, whether of the same
 “ or

* P. 154, 155.

† P. 121.

‡ P. 127.

|| P. 123, 129.

or of accumulated motives, as to leave little free-
 dom to the mind, or rather none at all *.” “ In
 short, if motives be not under our power or di-
 rection, which is confessedly the fact; we can, at
 bottom, have no liberty †.”—“ Where the mo-
 tives to any action are perfectly full, cogent, and
 clear; the sense of liberty, as we showed before,
 entirely vanisheth. In other cases, where the field
 of choice is wider, and where opposite motives
 counterbalance and work against each other; the
 mind fluctuates for a while, and feels itself more
 loose: But, in the end, must as necessarily be de-
 termined to the side of the most powerful motive,
 as the balance, after several vibrations, must in-
 cline to the side of the preponderating weight ‡.”
 Every inclination and choice is unavoidably caus-
 ed or occasioned by the prevailing motive.—Our
 desires, obviously, are not under our power; but
 are raised by means that depend not upon us:
 And if our desires are not under our power, nei-
 ther can our actions be under our power ||.”
 The existence of a motive once supposed, we have
 shown the mind to be necessarily determined §.”
 Subjected by a necessary law to the choice of evil,
 if evil happen to be the prevailing motive **.”

“ If such a being as man was to be placed in this
 world, to act his present part; it was necessary
 that he should have a notion of contingency in
 events, and of power to direct and control them.
 —The Deity cannot work contradictions. For
 if it was fit and wise, that man should think and
 act as an independent being; having power to
 regulate his own actions, and, by means of these,
 to regulate also future events; it was impossible
 this could be otherwise accomplished, than by
 O o “ enduing

* P. 122.

† P. 125.

‡ P. 126.

|| P. 130.

§ P. 131.

** P. 136.

“ enduing him with a sense of this power: And if
 “ it was also fit and wise, that universal necessity
 “ should be the real plan of the universe; this sense
 “ must be delusive *.”

§ II. The quotations now made, are the precise words of the *Essay*: And none of the above passages have any appearance of a different or softer meaning as they lie in the *Essay*, than as they lie here; nor is there any other passage in all the *Essays*, that has the smallest tendency for giving some other turn to the sense of any of these passages, than what they plainly bear at first view as here laid.

Yet the *Essayer*, in the course of his book, hath dropped some few expressions, or hath made some few glosses,—which cannot possibly be reconciled with the substance and essential constitution of his scheme now explained.—Truth and error can never consist; yet there can scarce be any book of human compofure so good or bad, as not have some mixture of both: But a book is to be judged of, according to which of these makes up the body of its doctrine.

Sometimes, when an author is proposing a new system,—it may not suit with his courage and his prudence, to be thorough-stitch with it; he may see meet to let some sketches of the old system remain: And these will go of course, if the new system should prevail; as some particular ailments will wear away, where a person's health is on the mending hand. It may also happen, that an author's intentness upon the ground-work of his scheme—may keep him from adverting to all the necessary, or even principal consequences of it; and so, from clearing off all inconsistencies: Which may remain as a task
 for

for others, who shall adopt and improve upon the scheme.

But must not an author's scheme be considered according to the substance and essential constitution of it, and not according to any patches of a different colour which may be found sticking on its surface? What can it signify, for excusing any part of an author's doctrine, to bring in some evidence of his contradicting himself? And how can the fair side of the contradiction give any rational satisfaction to a person, if the foul side must be maintained also, —especially when the foul side is the body of the scheme? An author may justly claim, that no part of his doctrine should be argued upon by itself, when the proper sense of that part depends upon taking some other part along with it; and this is certainly all that he has any title to, in a free debate.

§ III. In this third edition, the *Effayer* exults upon a discovery which he professes to have made,—of two errors taught by him in his former editions; that God had naturally endued men with a *delusive sense*, both of liberty in actions and of contingency in events. The opposite truths which he pretends to have discovered, are; that the sense of liberty “is suggested by the irregular influence of passion, and that we never have it in our cool moments; consequently, that it is not a delusion of *nature*, but of *passion* :” And that, by the sense of contingency in events,—“nothing is or can be meant, but that we are ignorant of the cause; and that, for ought we know, the event might have happened or might not happened; chance and contingency are expressive of our ignorance only, not of any looseness in the course of events.”

Yet, by this boasted discovery, the matter is not a whit mended; the odious doctrine of the *delusive sense*

sense is only clouded, by an art of delusive language. Though the delusive *sense* were allowed to be a delusion of *passion* and *ignorance* only, we are still where we were. For the alledged *passion* and *ignorance* must be reckoned so universal, as to regulate the the common *sense* of mankind; without any coolness of knowledge to the contrary “but by deep “thinking, and by a long chain of abstract and painful reasoning*.” The same *passion* and *ignorance*, according to the *Essayer's* scheme, do likewise belong to the system of universal necessity in the chain of causes and effects; as holding equally in the moral and material world: So that “not the smallest “est link of the chain” (the smallest degree of such *passion* and *ignorance*) “can be broken, without “altering the whole constitution of things, or suspending the regular operation of the laws of nature;—not the smallest link of the chain of causes “and effects can be broken, *nor any thing be otherwise than it is.*” The delusion of *passion* and *ignorance*, in the present case, must therefore be still a *delusion of nature*; a *delusive sense* of liberty and contingency with which God has necessarily endued mankind, in his forming of the great machine!

S E C T. II.

The Infidel-Scheme of Liberty and Necessity exposed.

THE real import, or the necessary consequences of the scheme which has been explained, are now to be laid open. It is not meant, to charge these consequences upon any *person*; but only upon the *scheme* itself. It must certainly be allowed, that the scheme is answerable for all the native and necessary consequences of it. If this be not the case, all free examination

mination of any doctrine must be at an end; with all proper caution against the malignancy which it may be of, or against being seduced thereby into a state of damnable error. No sober person can take it amiss, when a new scheme is proposed for our guidance, even affecting the whole system of morality and religion.—that we should freely enquire whether it would lead us, in its nature and necessary consequences. We have no business with what or how many consequences an author pleases, or pleases to own, that his doctrine should have; but with such consequences that the doctrine itself will have. The *Essayer* makes an attempt to obviate some pernicious import of his scheme; where some things inconsistent with it are brought forth, or rather granted: But no such attempt can be any proper apology for his scheme, when the scheme itself is not in the least given up with.

The author of a *Letter* concerning the *Essay* we are now speaking of, published the same year with the first edition of it,—after mentioning some consequences of the scheme, makes this remark, *viz.* “Those terrible and absurd consequences, with the
“ monstrous parent from whom they necessarily
“ proceed, must perish; or else the constitution of
“ nature, and the great Author of it too, must be
“ undone!” How far such a remark is well founded, may be thought of,—after considering the things now to be offered.

§ I. According to this scheme, *There is no room for God, as a continual and immediate worker, in the world which he hath made.*—We are told of established and immutable laws, in an universal chain or train of causes and effects; through the moral as well as material world: And to these laws called the Laws of Nature, a regular operation is ascribed. If these
laws

laws were meant of what we observe to be general and ordinary in God's pleasure, as to his habitual way of putting and keeping things together, in his government of the world; we should have no quarrel with this part of the scheme. But it is plain, that something very different is meant by these laws, —some imaginary qualities or powers, which God is supposed to have put into the nature and constitution of things; and which are reckoned to serve for maintaining the course of the world, without a continued and immediate interposal of the divine power.

These laws of nature are said to be such as admit the *possibility* of none other events, than what are comprehended in the original plan: Which can only be understood of laws in the constitution and nature of things; for it is only the *futurity*, and not the *possibility* of any other events, which God's pleasure could not admit. And they are said to be the laws which lie in God's having given *such a nature* to his creatures, and placed them in *such circumstances*, that a certain train of actions *behoved necessarily to follow*; to follow necessarily, from the nature and circumstances of things: So that the consequences, in all the course and events of this world, were not consequences to be immediately produced by him; but which he *must have foreseen*, as necessarily resulting from the nature and circumstances of things.—Accordingly, this universe is called a *vast machine* wound up and set a-going; set a-going, so as God is not still operating immediately upon and by the several springs and wheels, but they *operate unerringly one upon another*: The whole being thus like a going clock,—from the nature and constitution of which the hand advanceth and the clock strikes, precisely as the artist hath determined; without the artist hav-

ing

ing any occasion to keep his hand still at it, or needing to give it any continual assistance in its motions.

Here then is a world, as to the course of which nature does all; and the God of nature does nothing at all. He indeed has the honour of having formed the vast machine, putting it together and winding it up; but then, he has no other business with it than as a spectator; an onlooker or beholder of its goings. In such a world there is no more room for God, as to any operations, than there is for a clock-maker in a clock which he has made: And as the several springs and wheels are said to operate unerringly one upon another, so that the vast machine can never need any righting; the glorious Maker then, after he once set it a-going, can never more have the least occasion or access for putting a hand to it.

§ II. According to this scheme, *There is no room for any sovereignty of God's will in his eternal decrees.*—God hath decreed, from all eternity, whatsoever comes to pass in time: And the sovereignty of his will in doing so, lies here; that the taking place of every thing was to have its immediate dependence upon his will. His will was to have no dependence on any means or second causes which he saw meet to use, but these were to have all their dependence on his will; while no such mean or cause could be a mean or cause of any thing, but as he should still please to make it so, by a continued interposal of his efficacious will. Thus he foresaw whatever comes to pass, immediately upon the ground of his decreeing that it should come to pass; and not upon the ground of any foreseen virtue in second causes for bringing it to pass. “Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass upon all supposed conditions; yet hath he not decreed any thing be-
“ cause

“ cause he foresaw it as future, or as that which
 “ would come to pass upon such conditions *.”

But the new scheme teacheth us,—That God decreed all things which come to pass because he foresaw them as future: Because he foresaw that they would come to pass, and behoved necessarily to follow, upon the conditions into which he was to put the vast machine. For as we are told, that “ he gave
 “ such a nature to his creatures, and placed them
 “ in such circumstances, that a certain train of ac-
 “ tions behoved necessarily to follow;” so we are told, that he “ must certainly have foreseen the
 “ consequences,”—which were “ capable of being
 “ foreseen,” only *because* they were *certainly to happen*, from the nature and circumstances of things: And that therefore he “ did certainly resolve and
 “ decree” that they should happen. Thus, his *decreeing* of events is made to depend on his *foreseeing* of them: And we are taught, that “ it would in-
 “ volve a contradiction, to maintain, that future
 “ events could be certainly foreseen; were there
 “ not causes which render the existence of future
 “ events certain,” such causes in the nature and circumstances of things. He then foresaw what certainly would happen from such causes, and therefore decreed that it should happen.—Now, what sort of a decreeing behoved this to be? Just as if a clock-maker should decree concerning a good clock which he is to set a-going,—that, against a certain hour some day, the hand shall point to a certain figure, and the hammer shall give a certain number of strokes. Who sees not, that the maker might very well save himself the trouble of such a vain decreeing? For, whether he will these events, or will them not, or will the contrary, it is all one matter; they will come of course, without any continued dependence

* *Westminster Confession*, chap. iii. § 2.

dence on his will or pleasure,—just as the several springs and wheels work unerringly one upon another.

§ III. According to this scheme, *There is no room for any sovereignty of God's will in his universal providence.*—"God, the great Creator of all things, doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy providence; according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable council of his will; to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness and mercy:" And although, in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly; yet, by the same providence, he ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes; either necessarily, freely, or contingently:" And "God, in his ordinary providence, maketh use of means; yet is free to work without, above, and against them, at his pleasure *." Such is the absolute sovereignty of God's will in his providence, that all things depend immediately on his pleasure, through means or second causes where he sees meet to use them; not on the pleasure, or nature, or virtue of these means or second causes: While it holds of his providence, as of his decrees,—that thereby there "is no violence offered to the will of the creatures; nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established †."

But the new scheme teaches us, that "there is nothing in the whole universe, that can properly be called contingent, that may be or may not be ;

P p

—Nothing

* *Westminster Confession*, chap. v. § 1, 2, 3.

† *Ibid.* chap. iii. § 1.

“ —Nothing that can be called contingent,—but
 “ every thing must be precisely what it is, and be
 “ found in that state in which we find it:” So that
 the laws of nature are said to “ produce a regular
 “ train of causes and effects, in the moral as well
 “ as material world; bringing about those events
 “ which are comprehended in the original plan,
 “ and admitting the possibility of none other *.”

What

* The *Calvinist* writers upon providence do universally maintain the doctrine of *future contingents*; that is, of things which may be or may not be. Not as if they reckoned that any things are so, with respect to God; but that many things are so, with respect to us: And likewise that many things are so with respect to second causes, even consistently with the nature and ordinary course of these causes, abstracting from miraculous interposals; inlult as God sees meet to order the various conjunctures and operations of these causes, one way or other.

And it can be no way shocking to human understanding, but every way agreeable to sober reason, yea an essential dictate of it, —that all things, the least as well as the greatest, are under the continual attention and disposal of the infinite Being: Whose understanding, wisdom, and power, are infinite; who can attend to all things, as if they were but one thing; and who has wise ends to be served, though far out of our view, by the minutest things, and the minutest circumstances of these things.

But what understanding, upon a near view, can digest the present doctrine of universal necessity? We must believe, for instance, of every circumstance that can be observed about a hair, a feather, a straw, a grain of dust, or all the motes which we see dancing in a sun-beam,—that every such thing is a spring of the vast machine, or belongs to the unerring operation of its springs and wheels one upon another; every circumstance of such things proceeding from a train of causes and effects, through a chain of many millions of links, each linked fast into another, back to the morning of the creation: So as the laws of nature could not admit the possibility of any one of these things, or of any one circumstance of them, being otherwise than they are; but the the smallest variation would have been an “ altering the whole
 “ constitution of things, or suspending the regular operation of
 “ the laws of nature!”

A man sits down to a book, which he had left open upon his
 table;

What is it, then, that the sovereign will of God in his providence can have ado about such a world? Really, nothing at all.—We are not merely taught that nothing is *future*, but even that nothing is *possible*, except what actually comes to pass; as if God's omnipotence could extend to nothing beyond, or different from the state of this world: So that the supposition of “altering the whole constitution of “things,” or even of suspending the regular operation of the laws of nature,—is but the supposition of an *impossibility*.

As to all those things which actually come to pass, we are taught an *impossibility* of their being otherwise than they are,—that “every thing must be precisely what it is, and be found in the state in which “we find it;” and all this from the laws of nature, or from the nature and circumstances of things. Now, as God could have nothing ado in such a world, beside a mere onlooking; so there could be no room for any exercise of his will at all, about the management of it: Except like a clockmaker vainly willing the several motions of a well going clock which he has set up, just as he sees the motions going on; while they cannot follow his will, but his will must follow them.

As this world is said to be a vast machine, which
God

table; and observing that some dust had fallen upon it, he blows it off. Well, every thing about the number, size, place, and order of the different particles of the dust,—and about the course they take when blown off; every such thing, in every circumstance of the thing, must belong to the fatal chain of causes and effects,—beyond all possibility (from the beginning) of being otherwise, consistently with the laws of nature in the vast machine: So that the consequence must have been dreadful, —if but one particle of the dust which flew off at the man's right hand, had flown off at his left; nothing less than an universal ruin of the vast machine,—“the wreck of matter, and “the crush of worlds!”

God, having made, hath winded up and set a-going; and as the several springs and wheels of the machine are said to operate unerringly one upon another: So there could never be the least room for any actual providence of God, any real exercise of his power, about the going of such a machine. All that he could ever have ado with it, after he had set it a-going, except as an onlooker,—would be to wind it up again, for a new course, after it had run out in the last day: Nor could even this be; if the laws of nature cannot even admit a *possibility* of any other events, than what belong to the present state of the world.—In short, if the scheme we are upon mean any thing, it can mean nothing less than this: That however freely God acted as a Creator,—in forming the vast machine, putting it together, winding it up and setting it a-going; yet, all this once done the glorious Creator, with all the creatures, come to be bound up together by the same fatal chain of absolute and everlasting necessity!

§ IV. According to this scheme, *There is no room, in the system of the world, for what Christians believe,—as to the integrity of man's primitive estate, his fall from it, and the state of sin which is thence become original to all his posterity.*—Were there any room here for such things, they could only be upon the same level with all other things in the world; just some of the necessary and unerring operations of the springs and wheels of the vast machine,—things produced of course, by the laws of nature.

But indeed there is no room here for such things at all; because, according to the new scheme, man's present state is his primitive state: Without having undergone any change,—except so far as, in exercising thought and reason, “his nature is improved “ by the due use of these rational powers.” For,
with

with respect to the present nature and circumstance of all creatures, and so of man among the rest, (“man being what he is, a creature endued with a certain degree of understanding, certain passions and principles, and placed in certain circumstances;”) we are taught, that God “gave such a nature to his creatures, and placed them in such circumstances, as that a certain train of actions” (just what now takes place) “behoved necessarily to follow.”

Accordingly, it is said, with respect to *the great plan* of government which God *formed* in the original constitution of the vast machine; that “in this plan, man, a rational creature, bears his part, and fulfils certain ends for which he was designed:” So that he must be understood to be still as at first, in respect of fulfilling the ends for which he was designed; still bearing his part,—as “a part of that great machine, wound up and set a-going by the Author of his nature.”

The *Essayist* teaches to the same purpose, in another of his *Essays*; where he tries to account for God’s having given a place, in the original frame of the vast machine, to such an imperfect creature as man,—or to prove that this is no argument against the pure benevolence of the Deity. With regard to all natural evils, which others look upon as the punishments of sin, ascribing them to its guilt and God’s vindictive justice; he says, “we cannot rationally ascribe them,—but to the pre-established order and constitution of things, and to the necessary imperfection of all created beings:” And he adds, “Why should we hesitate a moment, to ascribe pure benevolence to the Deity; and to conclude these evils to be necessary defects in a good constitution *?”

With

With regard to all moral evils, or matters of sin,—he admits (while arguing that it is no relevant objection against the benevolence of the Deity), that God “hath given man a constitution by which moral evil doth and must abound;” and accordingly teaches, that “all things in the moral as well as material world proceed according to settled laws established by providence:” And his way of accounting for all this, is as follows, *viz.* “We have a just ground of conviction, that all matters are by providence ordered in the best manner; and therefore that even human vices and frailties are made to answer wise and benevolent purposes: Every thing possesses its proper place in the divine plan: All our actions contribute equally to carry on the great and good designs of our Maker; and therefore there is nothing which in his sight is ill; at least, nothing which is ill upon the whole*.” And as to any complaint about the moral imperfection of man’s present state, he says,—“If this complaint be well founded, we may, with equal justice, complain, that our understanding is but moderate; and that, in general, our powers and faculties are limited.”—“In short, if this complaint be in any measure just, it must go the length—to prove, that it is not consistent with the benevolence of the Deity to create such a being as man†.” And so our being *sinful creatures*, is put upon the same level of divine constitution with our being *but creatures*; God having made us the one as much as the other, in a full consistency with his benevolence.

Concerning both natural and moral evils, he tells us,—“that the world is filled with an endless variety of creatures, gradually ascending in the scale of being, from the most grovelling to the most glorious:—And supposing the world to be replenished

* P. 295, 296.

† P. 297.

“plentiful with the highest order of beings, created in the highest degree of perfection; it is certainly an act of more extensive benevolence, to complete the work of creation, by the addition of an infinity of creatures less perfect, than to leave a great blank betwixt beings of the highest order and nothing*.” To the same purpose he says,—“Must it not be admitted, that somewhere in the scale of existence, an imperfect order of beings must be found? And why not man such a being†?”—According to this view of matters, it belonged to the completing of the work of creation; to the completeness or perfection of the vast machine, in God’s original formation of it; that the man should have a place in it, according to the state which he is presently in.

The plain result of the whole is,—That (excepting improvements) man is still in his primitive estate; he is just now, as God made man at first: So that God’s having made man upright, the fall of the first man, and his posterity becoming plunged through his fall into a state of sin and misery,—are things which this scheme cannot possibly admit into the system of the world.

§ V. According to this scheme, *There is no room, in the system of the world, for God’s exercising a moral dominion over sinful men, in the way of blame and punishment.*—There are only two ways in which God’s moral dominion over rational creatures can be supported, or exist; in their obedience to the precepts of his law, or in their subjection to its penalties: And it is only in this last way, that his moral dominion can be exercised over sinful men as such; yet the new scheme leaves no room for it.

The *Essayist* has very peculiar doctrine about moral

* P. 288.

† P. 305.

ral evil, that abominable thing which God hates. We have already quoted some articles of that doctrine, and may now subjoin a few more. He says, that “natural and moral evil are far from prevailing in this world *;” though a vastly different account is given us in God’s word †. He says further, that “the more of nature is explored and known, the less of evil appears: New discoveries of wisdom, order, and good intention, are the never-failing effects of enlarged knowledge; an intimation not obscure, of its being owing to our imperfect and bounded views, that evil is supposed to take place at all ‡:” Yet Christians have hitherto believed, that the more of nature is explored and known,—still the more of moral evil is to be found, in the world and in the hearts of men. He says also, in an address to the *Eternal Mind*; “As spots in the sun’s bright orb, so in the universal plan, scattered evils are lost in the blaze of superabundant goodness: Even by the research of human reason, weak as it is, these seeming evils diminish and fly away apace: Objects supposed superfluous or noxious, have assumed a beneficial aspect,—how much more to thine all-penetrating eye must all appear excellent and fair.—Even the follies and vices of men minister” (*N. B.* Not only are over-ruled, but minister) “to thy wise designs: And as at the beginning of days thou sawest, so thou seest and pronounceest still, that every thing thou hast made is good ||;”—while it is to be remembered, that, according to this scheme, whatever belongs to the present state of this world is of God’s making.

Nor is it any wonder, that the *Essayer* should speak so diminutively of *moral evil*: For his scheme of universal

* P. 254. † Psal. liii. 1, 2, 3.; 1 John v. 19.

‡ P. 305, 306. || P. 309.

niversal necessity cannot properly admit an owning, that there is any such thing at all; since the very essence of moral evil lies in a contrariety to God's holy will. If this scheme were to have an universal prevalence,—the words *moral evil*, and all equivalent terms, should then be blotted out of all languages. However, it is very plain, that this scheme can allow no blamableness and punishableness of what is called *moral evil*. For,

1st, We are taught, as hath been explained, that man's present state is his primitive state; that he is still bearing his original part in the vast machine, fulfilling the ends for which he was designed. And how could man, in this condition, be an object of God's wrath and vindictive justice? Must it not be absurd to imagine, that any thing of God's own doing, as to his way of constituting the vast machine,—could be the object of his wrath and vindictive justice? Accordingly, in the *Essayer's* doctrine about the Deity, when he proposes nothing less than “to take a general view of the attributes which belong to the great Being;” he admits no attributes into that general view,—but *unity, power, intelligence, and pure benevolence*: An allegation not obscure, that no such attribute as *vindictive justice* can belong to the Deity.

2^{dly}, We are taught, “that all human actions proceed in a fixed and necessary train;” that God hath so endued and placed man, that “it is impossible that he should will or chuse otherwise than in fact he wills and chuses;” that “comparing together the moral and material world, every thing is as much the result of established laws in the one as in the other:” That as “every motion in the material,” so “every determination and action in the moral world are directed by immutable laws; so that, whilst these laws remain in

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“force,

“ force, not the smallest link of the universal chain
 “ of causes and effects can be broken, nor any
 “ thing be otherwise than it is;” and “ that it is
 “ a regular train of causes and effects in the moral
 “ as well as material world,” which “ these laws
 “ produce,—bringing about those events which are
 “ comprehended in the *original plan*, and admitting
 “ the possibility of none other.” All this is taught,
 and more to the same purpose.

Now, can any mind reconcile these things with the idea of man's *accountableness* to God, as an object of blame; of his being accountable for any thing, to God as an offended and righteous Judge? Can God seek, or find fault with the want of *original impossibilities*? Can God be offended at the established laws of nature, in their most necessary product, when they are laws of his own establishing? Can God be offended at any thing in the moral world, more than in the material world; if there be still a *regular train* of causes and effects, according to the laws of nature, bringing about these events which are comprehended in the *original plan*,—through all the one world, as much as through the other? Or, if any blame can be found in all this, how can it lie at man's door, who did not make those established and immutable laws; but is only living in a regular subjection to them, with all his actions “ in a fixed and necessary train” of conformity to those laws which God has made?

3dly, To the same purpose, we may consider the doctrine of this new scheme about *motives*. A wonderful power is ascribed to these, so that every thing of a man's behaviour is made to turn absolutely upon them.—We are told, that “ the *existence* of a
 “ motive being once supposed, *the mind is necessarily*
 “ *determined*; so that every inclination and choice
 “ is unavoidably caused or occasioned by the pre-
 “ vailing

“ vailing motive,” whatever happens to be the strongest of any motives that come in a man’s way. Once suppose an impression made by this motive, then all goes of course, in a chain of most fatal and adamantine necessity; the *last judgment of the understanding, the will, and the external action*,—necessarily follow, in the most inviolable train of absolute necessity. And we are taught also, that the mind is passive, as to that impression of the motive which carries all so dreadfully before it; that man’s “ mind “ is passive, in receiving impressions of things as “ good or ill,”—in receiving them, to that infallible and unavoidable issue which has been mentioned. Accordingly we are told, that “ motives are not “ under our power or direction;” that “ our desires obviously are not under our power,” as being “ raised by means” (these motives) “ that “ depend not upon us;” that therefore “ neither “ can our actions be under our power.” So that, upon the whole, every man “ is subjected by a necessary law to the choice of evil, if evil happen to “ be the prevailing motive,” or the strongest of those motives that come in the mind’s way; while all this law about motives is a law of God’s own making, in the original constitution of the vast machine.

And how can the least room be found, if the case were as above, for any blamableness and punishableness of any human actions? There is no possibility of blame getting leave to rest a moment, any where in all this system; unless it be all rolled over upon the fatal *motive*, which God only is accountable for.

4thly, It cannot salve the difficulty one whit, to make man any way accountable for his actions,—that he has a natural sense of contingency in events, and liberty in actions: When all this sense is taught

to be *delusive*, a mere deceit in the constitution of human nature.—For in what state is a man's soul *, particularly his will, said to be, with respect to motives which no way depend on him? Just such as a weathercock is in, with respect to the wind: And though he has a sense of self-motion, a sense of spontaneous or voluntary acting; yet all this is just as if a weathercock were endued with an imagination of its making its own motions, while every body sees that the wind makes them all. Now, though a man should have a most cutting remorse, in a sense of blame and liableness to punishment for any thing he has done; must not all this remorse be a vain fancy,—while his sense of blame and liableness to punishment for any actions, cannot miss to be as delusive as his sense of liberty about these same actions? All this sense and remorse can be owing only to its being *hid from him that he is a necessary agent*; no more accountable for any thing, at bottom, than a weathercock is for its motions. And whatever the remorse may be, whatever may be the sense of blame and liableness to punishment for his actions; yet can we suppose that God's procedure is to be regulated by the man's groundless remorse? Can we suppose that God will punish him, for a matter of blame which has no being, except in the man's own fancy? Can God, who sees well enough through all the vain imagination, proceed against a man upon imaginary grounds, without any real ground at all?

And, according to this new scheme, what can be the

* According to this scheme, all the workings of the mind, the most fleeting thought, the most idle fancy,—are all under the same necessity with the motions of the will: All necessarily linked into the great chain of causes and effects, under an utter impossibility (from the beginning) of having been otherwise than they are; so that the want of any one of these thoughts or fancies, out of any one mind since the creation,—would have broke the chain, and laid the whole frame of nature in ruins!

the only proper relief to a man, with respect to any remorse or blot upon his conscience? There can be no room here for any thing of what Christians believe, about the purging of a man's conscience and the redemption of his guilty soul. All that he can have ado is just this,—That he should labour, with some penetrating philosopher, to get into the *dead secret* of universal necessity; to see himself absolutely under the influence of motives, which no more depend on him than the wind does on a weathercock,—are no more under his power or direction, than the wind is under its: And to see that all this fatal wind of motives, which manages him with the most absolute control, is a wind of God's raising and keeping up, in the established and immutable laws of nature.—It is most evident, that according to the impression a man may get his mind under of all this, which belongs to the very vitals of the new scheme; accordingly will his conscience be cleared, and quite satisfied, take what course he will.

5thly, The *Essayer* was sensible enough, that no blame or punishableness could be well made to turn upon a man's *actions*,—if the sense of liberty be a delusive sense: And therefore, in the second edition, he makes it to turn upon the *disposition, frame, or temper* of the mind. Thus he says,—“ that praise and
 “ blame rest ultimately upon the disposition or frame
 “ of mind; that a virtuous disposition is the only
 “ object of praise, and a vicious disposition the
 “ only object of blame *.” “ And indeed as e-
 “ very action doth in effect proceed from an inter-
 “ nal cause, *viz.* A virtuous or vicious temper;
 “ praise or blame must ultimately rest upon this
 “ cause, and not upon the external action, or the
 “ power of acting †.”

It may be observed here, that Christians have al-
 ways

* P. 145.

† P. 148.

ways reckoned transgressions of God's law to be a direct and immediate ground of blame and punishment,—over and above the vicious disposition from which these proceed. Besides, it will never be found in fact, that the challenges of conscience turn upon the viciousness of man's disposition, overlooking the vicious actions which proceed from it; but that they also turn immediately on the vicious actions, as what cannot be excused by the vicious disposition. And how could a judge condemn a murderer to death,—not for his *external action* of committing murder, as not reckoning that a blamable action; but only for the *vicious disposition* from which he committed it: When it is only for his external action that the jury finds him guilty, and that he suffers accordingly!

However, the turning over of blame and punishableness upon the disposition, could no way mend the matter. For how is it that any man has come by this vicious disposition, frame, or temper of mind? It is just such, according to the present scheme, as God endued the man with, in the original plan and constitution of the vast machine: It is just the disposition which the man has originally from God, upon the same footing as every thing else has its particular nature from him; according to the established and immutable laws of nature. And can God blame or punish his own doing, in this case? Can he blame or punish any of the springs or wheels which he originally put into the vast machine, more than any of their unerring operations?

Moreover, seeing man is under the same sort of necessity about his disposition as about his actions; must there not be as much delusion in a sense of blame and punishableness on account of his disposition, as in a sense of it on account of his actions? His vicious disposition may be an object of dislike or hatred, in itself considered,—as some ugly or hurtful

hurtful beasts are ; or it may be a ground of pity and sorrow, like bodily diseases : But no moral blame or punishableness can belong to the man, in this case, —more than to the beasts or diseases.

In all this matter, we are arguing no otherwise from the *Essayer's* principles of necessity than he himself once did. Some of his reasonings from these principles in his first edition, are indeed dropped in the second : But as the same principles are retained in the second edition, the same reasonings from them are what no man will be able to overthrow,—without overthrowing the principles themselves. The reasonings meant are such as these, which he uses in his first edition, *viz.* “ We must therefore admit, “ that the idea of freedom, or a power of regulat- “ ing our will and actions according to certain rules, “ is essential to the moral feeling. On the system “ of universal necessity, abstracted from this feel- “ ing,” (which is *delusive*, as he teaches); “ though “ certain affections and actions might excite our ap- “ probation, and others our dislike, there could be “ no place for blame or remorse *.” “ Suppose man “ to see and conceive his own nature, and the con- “ stitution of all things, in the light of strict philo- “ sophic truth, in the same light they are beheld by “ the Deity ; to conceive himself, and all his actions, “ necessarily linked into the great chain of causes “ and effects, which renders the whole order, both “ of the natural and moral world, unalterably de- “ termined in every article :—And what would fol- “ low?—We would feel—no remorse in doing ill ; “ —there would be no more place for—blame a- “ mong mankind ;—no more notion of account- “ ableness for the use of their rational powers ; no “ sense of ill desert or just punishment annexed to “ crimes as their due ;—there would be field for no
“ other

* P. 199.

“ other passions but love and hatred, sorrow and
 “ pity ; and the sense of *duty*, of being *obliged* to
 “ certain things which we *ought* to perform, must
 “ be quite extinguished : For we can have no con-
 “ ception of moral *obligation*, without supposing a
 “ power in the agent over his own actions* ;” a
 power which men are affirmed to have only a *delu-*
sive sense of, without any reality of the thing.

§ VI. According to this scheme, *there is no room in the system of the world, for any thing of what Christians believe,—as to God’s miraculous and supernatural dispensations since the beginning of the world.*—The Scripture contains many striking accounts of such dispensations ; some of them to be a standing matter of everlasting wonder, among men and angels. There are his miracles in the *universal deluge*, in the confusion of tongues at *Babel*, in the destruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* ; his miracles in *Egypt*, at the *Red sea*, at *Sinai*, in all his conduct of *Israel* through the wilderness, at *Jordan*, at *Jericho* ; his miraculous stopping of the sun’s course in the days of *Joshua*, his miraculous turning of it back in the days of *Hezekiah*, and his miraculous transformations of *Nebuchadnezzar*,—with other wonders of Old-Testament times ;—and there are the many miracles which were wrought by our Lord and his Apostles : But above all, there is the great supernatural wonder of the incarnation of the eternal Son of God ; his ministry in this world ; his obedience unto the death of the cross, with the wonders which attended it ; his resurrection from the dead, and his triumphant ascension into glory.

Now, what are we to think of all these things, according to the new scheme of universal necessity ? Either that there never were any such things : Or that they
 were

* P. 204, 205, 206.

were all things of course, according to the established and immutable laws of nature; just the product of the unerring operation of the springs and wheels of the vast machine, as every other thing, beyond all possibility of having been otherwise; nothing more of God's interpositional in any of these things, than in *Nero's* burning *Rome* and murdering his mother. For, as we have seen, the scheme leaves no room for God to have ever broken in upon the goings of the vast machine,—by doing any thing against, beyond, or beside its necessary course. The shocking blasphemy as well as falsehood of such a scheme, especially in the present view of it, needs not to be enlarged upon.

§ VII. According to this scheme, *there is no room in the system of the world, for any such thing as God's addresses to men.*—The Scripture contains manifold accounts of his addressing himself to men; in precepts and calls; in promises and threatenings. But how could these things be, according to the new scheme of universal necessity? How could God require men to do or abstain from any thing; if neither doing nor abstaining belongs to them, but just as they are delusively moved by the immutable laws of nature,—under an absolute impossibility of things being otherwise with them, than as these laws necessarily and infallibly make the same to be? And how could God either promise or threaten to do any thing; if no doing at all (nought but onlooking) belongs to him in this world, ever since he wound up the vast machine and set it a-going,—nature doing all, and the God of nature nothing?

§ VIII. According to this scheme, *there is no room in the system of the world for any such thing as mens addresses to God.*—The Scripture represents it as e-

very way competent for men, and highly incumbent upon them, that they should pay homage to God; in humble confessions of their sin, thankful acknowledgments of his goodness, earnest deprecations of his deserved judgments, and fervent supplications for his free mercies: While the Calvinist scheme of liberty and necessity leaves the fullest room for all this. It owns the greatest reality of man's guiltiness, to be humbly confessed; and it owns the greatest reality of God's goodness, as he is a continual and immediate worker in the course of providence,—to be thankfully acknowledged. Moreover, according to the Calvinist scheme,—though God be of *one mind*, unchangeable in his counsels, invariable as to his accomplishments of them, and incapable of taking new measures; yet still there is the greatest propriety of earnest deprecations, and of fervent supplications: As these are a due homage to the universal LORD;—and as they are among the means which he has appointed and brings about, through which his ends are gained. His favourable dispensations do thus most mysteriously turn out,—as both an accomplishment of his own purposes, and an answer to the prayers of his people: While, all along, he is considered as a free agent, subjected to no immutable laws of nature; turning about second causes, by the bridle of his providence as he sees meet, even abstracting from miraculous dispensations.

But how can any such things take place, according to the new scheme of universal necessity? If it hold, man has really nothing to confess: Nor can he have God to thank, for doing or giving any good; further than to praise him for setting up the vast machine, as what does and gives all of course. Thus, the *Essays* are concluded with a very new cast of praise; in an address to the *Eternal Mind*, only as the *sovereign Architect of all*: In which address there

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is not a word of confession, as to any thing wrong or wanting about men; nor a word of thanksgiving for any good, further than as coming in the fatal course of nature.—Neither is there, in that address to God, a word of deprecation for his averting any deserved ills; nor a word of petition, for his doing or giving any good: And no wonder, if there be no room left for his averting, or doing, or giving any thing at all, further than in letting the established and immutable laws of nature take their course; as laws which can admit of no continued interposition of his power, one way or other.

What then must be thought of all prayers to God? What must be thought of all solemn humiliations before him, with deprecations of his judgments,—in times of burning drouhts, of rotting rains, of inundations; of any unfavourable seasons, of famine, of pestilence, of war,—of any calamities, distresses or dangers whatever? All such addresses to God must be reckoned quite improper, and absolutely vain. There is no room left for them; while there is no room left for God to regard them, or to make any interposals at all on our behalf: And nothing can remain for us, but to take all as it comes, in the fatal necessity of nature's course,—without any such vain and mistaken acknowledgments of God; if the same fatal necessity binds him up, to be but an on-looker as to the whole.

§ IX. According to this scheme, *there is no room in the system of the world for any thing of what Christians believe,—as to God's distinguishing and wonderful dispensations toward men in a Church-state, from the beginning of the world till now.* What a glorious bulk do these dispensations bear,—in the holy Scriptures, in the course of providence, and in the faith of Christians?—But what must we think of all these, according

according to the new scheme of universal necessity? What must we think of the *Jewish* Church-state,—in all that belonged to its erection, ordinances, worship, vicissitudes, and abolishment; of the *Christian* Church-state, in breaking down the wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles, with all the triumphs of the glorious Mediator, in forming and managing his Church among the heathen; of all the dispensation of ordinances in the Gospel-church, and all their success with all her deformations and reformatations; of the Church's trials under, and triumph over Rome Pagan; of Antichrist's rise and progress,—with all God's appearances for his Church, against that mystical Babylon; of all his singular judgments and mercies hitherto, concerning the Church-state;—yea of all the gracious changes that have ever been wrought in the souls of men?

These are great things indeed, of a very distinguishing nature: But what must we think of them all, according to the new scheme? Just that they were not at all; or were all things of course, in the unerring operations of the springs and wheels of the vast machine: That (so far as they are at all) they are all the product of the established and immutable laws of nature, necessarily linked into the great chain of causes and effects,—under an impossibility, from the beginning, of having been any otherwise; just on a level with every thing else that takes place in the world, all on the same footing of necessity in nature's course,—without any particular interposition of the God of nature: So that we must be reckoned to have gospel-ordinances on the same footing of necessity with civil offices, and Bibles on the same footing of necessity with any other books; nothing more of God in the one case, than in the other!

And what must we think of all the prophecies which God has given out in the Church; many of which have been most exactly fulfilled, and others
of

of them yet remain to be so? We must just think that they are God's foretelling of things, from his full insight into the laws of nature,—or from his foreseeing what these laws would necessarily produce, in the fatal chain of causes and effects: So that his prophecies must be reckoned to have come forth on the same footing, with an astronomer's foretelling an eclipse; without any difference, but what respects the greater degree of God's insight into these established laws of nature?

§ X. According to this scheme, *there is no room for what Christians believe, as to the displays of God's justice and grace in the eternal state of man.*—If it be admitted as a fact, that some of mankind are to have a most grievous eternity in hell, and others of them a most glorious eternity in heaven; then what must we think of all this, according to the new scheme of universal necessity? We cannot be allowed to think, that the justice of God is to have any thing a-do in the one case,—or the grace of God in the other. Everlasting damnation and everlasting salvation, must only be considered as the final issue of the unerring operations of the springs and wheels of the vast machine; all coming of course, as the necessary result of the immutable laws of nature: Divine justice and divine grace, with all the concerns of the divine glory in the exercise of these high attributes, being finally excluded,—both out of this world, and also the world to come!

Such as hath been represented is the real import, and such are the necessary consequences,—of the *Essayer's* scheme about liberty and necessity: A scheme which evidently means a most desperate and blasphemous opposition to the whole system of CHRISTIANITY; to the GLORY of God, and the eternal GOOD of mankind.

CHAPTER II.

Of the Christian and rational Scheme of Liberty and Necessity.

HAVING now demolished a fabric of most shocking *infidelity* and *absurdity*; we proceed, on God's behalf, to build a fabric of *Christianity* and *reason* upon its ruins.

The case of *Liberty* and *Necessity* is a subject on which a great deal has been wrote, with much nicety of speculation: And there is a hazard of running into such refinements upon it, as are ready to confound or escape the gripe of any man's understanding. But there is no necessity here, of such subtilizing in this matter. It is designed to abstain, so far as possible, from a course of abstruse reasonings; explaining the subject in such a manner, as may fall within the cognizance of ordinary readers.

There is one great evil to be guarded against here, of substituting mere imaginations for realities.—God's world is full of mysteries to us; of deeps which the line of our understanding cannot fathom. And when the pride of the understanding cannot be gratified, by such a comprehension of God's world as it would be at; some are ready to set up an imaginary world in the place of it, a creature of their own fancy, which they can better see through and explain,—palming this upon men, for the world that God hath made and manages: Which will be found to be the amount of more fashionable schemes than one. Let us then endeavour to satisfy ourselves with taking things as they are; and with such a view of them as our minds may soberly attain.

The doctrine of *Liberty* and *Necessity* is of a two-fold

fold consideration, as it respects the *material* and the *moral* world; which are therefore to be distinctly handled.

S E C T. I.

Of Liberty and Necessity in the material World.

WHAT is called *liberty* in the material world, is more properly called *contingency* or *chance*. Yet the character of *liberty* is not improper; so far as it denotes that every part of the material world, considered abstractly in the nature of the thing,—is perfectly *free*, loose and disconnected with regard to every part of it: In opposition to the fancy of all these parts being, from their own nature, as so many links of a great chain; each holding fast, and drawing another after it. But in order to a distinct view of this *liberty*, this contingency or chance; it will be proper to begin with a view of that *necessity* which belongs to the material world.

ART. I. *Of Necessity in the material World.*

§ I. We cannot particularly understand what *matter* is; what that subject is to which many visible properties belong, considered abstractly from these properties: And some philosophers have fallen into such plunges of difficulty about it, as have brought them to the ridiculous issue of denying that there is really such a thing as matter. It is not proposed to deal here with any who need to have the *existence* of matter proved to them, or *that* it is: And as to *what* it is, or what may be ascribed to it, we must satisfy ourselves with the testimony of our bodily senses,—under the cognizance of reason, and in a conformity to God's word.

§ II. Among all the essential properties of matter; none can be more certainly ascribed to it than what is commonly called *inertia*; or a disposition to continue in rest, without any motion or activity,—farther than as it is moved or acted upon, by some external power. There is nothing more obvious than this, in the greatest part of the matter that we see around us: And, as to those parts of mere matter, whose motion or activity may seem to be from a principle within themselves,—it must certainly, however, be from impressions made upon them; though these impressions lie not open to common view. If motion were essential to matter, then all matter would be always moving; which every body knows is not the case. And to suppose that mere matter may be somehow endued with a power of self-motion, is to suppose a destruction of it,—or of the essential difference between matter and spirit; jumbling the material and spiritual worlds into utter confusion. For self-motion is the same with spontaneous motion; which is the same with voluntary motion; so that an ascribing of this to mere matter, must be an ascribing of will to it,—from which understanding cannot be separated. A power of self-motion must then be a voluntary and rational principle, which cannot belong to mere matter: And a power of self-motion in any being, is a power of acting upon itself; which is a power belonging to spirits, so as to be utterly inconsistent with all ideas of mere matter.

But it is needless to enlarge upon an establishing of this point, in the present controversy; and that for two reasons.—One is, that the *Essayist* mentions a *power of beginning motion* as a distinguishing property of rational creatures*; which must imply an acknowledgment, that no such power belongs to mere matter. The other reason is,—that though

such

* P. 122.

such a power were allowed to move matter, an adversary could gain no real advantage from it in this controversy: Because no exercise of such a power in matter, more than in spirits, could be withdrawn from an immediate dependence on God.

§ III. The whole matter of this world, as God first created it, was a chaos,—without form, and void. But he soon raised it up into a most admirable form, into a world of most admirable furniture; putting it upon a course which has continued, through manifold vicissitudes and revolutions, till this day,—and will do so, till the end of time. Men may call it, if they please, a vast machine; but they should not presume to explain it according to the principles of machinery, in any human workmanship. One part of matter is indeed formed for acting upon another; and there are mysterious combinations of the different parts of matter, as endued with different properties,—all making up a wonderful chain, or rather a contexture of many wonderful chains, of causes and effects. We see many parts of matter put in motion immediately by man; yet we also see manifold motions and operations of the several elements, particularly in the vegetable and animal parts of matter, which have no dependence on man,—nor fall within the reach of his comprehension. But,

§ IV. As matter cannot move itself, so it is a fundamental principle in the doctrine of *Calvinists*,—That every part of the material world has an immediate dependence on the will and power of God; in respect of every motion and operation, as well as in respect of continued existence.

Let us see what the holy Scriptures testify on this head; despising that philosophy which scorns to take assistance from God's word.—*God worketh all in*

all *. He worketh all things, after the counsel of his own will †. By him all things consist ‡; all workings, as well as workers. He doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth ||; as even a heathen could say. He giveth to all life and breath,—in him we live and move §. He giveth snow,—he scattereth the hoar-frost,—he casteth forth his ice,—he causeth his wind to blow **. He ruleth the raging of the sea; when the waves thereof arise, he stilleth them ††. He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire ‡‡. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man, that he may bring forth food out of the earth ||||. He maketh his sun to rise, and sendeth rain §§. He gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons ***.—In a word, with respect to all former things; whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven, and in the earth, in the seas, and all deep places †††. And with respect to all that can take place in the world,—he says, (not a machine which I have set up shall stand and do; but) *My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure* †††.

§ V. We may justly conclude, then,—that God is still working, in all the motions and operations of matter; and that no part of matter has any intrinsic virtue for producing any effect, independently of his working in and by it. His work of preservation is a work of continued creation; there is as real an exertion of omnipotence, in carrying any creature over from

* 1 Cor. xii. 6.

† Col. i. 17.

§ Acts xvii. 25. 28.

†† Psal. lxxxix. 9.

||| Psal. civ. 14.

*** Acts xiv. 17.

††† Isa. xlv. 10.

† Eph. i. 11.

|| Dan. iv. 35.

** Psal. cxlvii. 16, 17, 18.

†† Psal. xlv. 9.

§§ Matth. v. 45.

††† Psal. cxxxv. 6.

from one moment of existence to another, as there was in bringing it at first out of nothing. And the continual dependence of every creature on God, for its being,—must respect all the modifications of its being, in every motion and operation; so that there must be a continual dependence of the creature on him for all these, a continual dependence of all these on him. His providence lies in preserving and governing all the actions of his creatures, as well as all the creatures themselves.

He has endued the different parts of matter with different properties; and he has settled an ordinary course of his operation by them, in a conformity to these properties: But then the various parts of matter, so qualified, can no more avail for producing any effect out of his hand,—than any tool can do, out of the hand of the workman. Without a present interposition of his power, the sun cannot shine, the fire cannot burn,—nor any part of matter produce any thing at all. That the sun stood still in the days of *Joshua*; that the strongest fire had no power over the bodies of three men, whom *Nebuchadnezzar* caused to be cast into it; that the sun was darkened at our Lord's crucifixion, without any natural obstruction of its light: None of these things were, or could be, from a miraculous operation of the divine power,—but from a miraculous suspension of it; as sun and fire, and all creatures, are nothing, and can do nothing, but as he upholds them and works by them. Could any creature be or do otherwise, for one moment; it would, for that moment, be in a state of independence on God, a God to itself.—Such is the room which belongs to the infinite One, in the world which he has made. And what does it all amount to? To nothing but what must be readily admitted, by every person who would entertain suitable conceptions of the Godhead: Just to this, that

that no sort of *self-sufficiency* can belong to any creature for a moment, either in existing or acting; this being an incommunicable prerogative of the glorious Creator and Upholder of all, who is all in all.

§ VI. There is a quotation to the above purpose (though it also respects the moral world), which the *Essayer* quotes from *Calvin's Institutions* *; with a most absurd pretence of its agreeing to his scheme. A translation of it, more literal and fairer too, than that which he gives, is as follows, *viz.* “ They who “ would render this doctrine odious” (the *Calvinist* doctrine of necessity), “ reproach it as the opinion of the *Stoics* about Fate; which also was sometimes objected to Augustine.—We do not, with “ the *Stoics*, invent a necessity from a perpetual “ connection, and a certain intricate concatenation “ of causes, comprehended in nature. But we “ make God the sovereign Manager and Governor “ of all things; who, according to his wisdom, decreed from all eternity what he was to do; and “ now performs, by his power, what he decreed. “ Whence we affirm, that, by his providence, not “ only the heaven and the earth, and inanimate “ creatures, but also the designs and wills of men “ are so governed, as that they are fitly carried to “ the end appointed by him.” According to this doctrine, the course of events in the world no way depends on any natural and intrinsic virtue of causes, or of a chain of causes; but immediately on God himself, as working in and by these causes: It is he who, by his own power, brings about the execution of his eternal decrees.

§ VII. It is quite another sort of world which the *Essayer*

* Book i. chap. 16. sect. 8.

Essay and his friend the *Observer* * are for. In their opinion, “to endue matter with a power of
 “acting according to general and invariable laws,
 “exhibits a more beautiful complete system, than
 “to leave it absolutely inert” (that is, absolutely matter), “to require a continual interposition of the
 “Deity;” that is, to be absolutely a creature, in an absolute and continued dependence on God! The *Observer* thinks, that “the perfection of every
 “piece of workmanship, human and divine, consists in its answering the designed purpose, without bestowing further labour upon it:” But the true God could not make any piece of workmanship which he would have to bestow no further labour upon; because he cannot deny himself. The *Observer* is not afraid to “conclude, that the doctrine
 “of the absolute inertness of matter is not only repugnant to truth, but tends in an indirect manner to arraign the Deity of want of power or of
 “wisdom, or of both:” As if it could consist with any perfection, or with the very being of the true Deity,—that there should be a world which could go its course without him, without his continued interposition, without his bestowing further labour upon it; a world inconsistent with his universal supremacy, as with the essential and absolute dependence of all creatures on him.

§ VIII. It is to no purpose, for establishing the doctrine of such a world,—that a quotation is brought from the Honourable Mr. *Boyle*, yea were it apparently from the highest angel. Mr. *Boyle* was of a very respectable character; but we must be allowed to think that he was liable, as other great men, to an occasional slightness of sentiments. His studies
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* One who published *Observations*, in a violent defence of the *Essays*.

and writings were too extensive, for his having leisure to weigh every point: And we may well suppose, from his character, that, if he had weighed the matter, he would not have adhered to the unworthy sentiment,—which was suggested to him by some superficial glare, in the comparison of God's world with an engine or machine of human workmanship. That such a machine, when once set up, should go,—without the maker, or any deputed by him, having still a hand at it; this does not so much argue the perfection of the machine, as the imperfection of the maker: While the materials of it have many properties in no dependence on him; and the momentary countinuance of that form in which he sets it up, has as little dependence on him. Besides, it consists not with the nature of such a machine, or of its maker,—that he should still be in it, and in every part of it.

But all is quite otherwise with God's world: Every thing in and about it must continue to have an immediate and absolute dependence on himself; and it must always be full of him. The beauty and perfection of it can nowise lie in any capacity of being or doing any thing without him; but is all derived from the glory of his being, and wisdom, and power,—as continually shining through the whole.

There is a great variety of material causes, producing a great variety of effects, in the system of this world; but, as to each of these, God is the supreme and immediate cause. The nature and efficiency of the supreme cause, and of any subordinate cause, are so infinitely different,—that there is no inconsistency of each being an immediate and total cause of the same effect, each according to its kind. So that God is working in and through all things, agreeable to the nature and properties which he has
endued

endued them with ; not merely in the way of a general, but of a most particular concurrence.

§ IX. This doctrine doth not mean, to make God the soul of the universe.—It is indeed full of him: *He is above all, and through all, and in all: Of him, and through him, and to him are all things* *. But he is in the world, so as to be infinitely different from it; no way confined to it; no way extended through it; no way subjected to its influence, but it wholly subjected to his: He is wholly in all, and wholly in every part,—so as to be wholly without and above all; *working all things*, working in and through all his creatures, *after the council of his own will* †.—These are things which we cannot comprehend, but must admire. We cannot understand how these things can be: But we may understand that God cannot be, according to what the infinite One must be,—if these things be not so.

§ X. What sort of *necessity*, then, takes place in the material world ; as to the manifold events or effects which it abounds with?—We may readily judge of this from what has been said; that no proper necessity can lie in the nature of things, abstractly considered. All things of the world, with all the nature of these things, must be reckoned nothing at all,—but just as God every moment pleases that they should be; none of these things having any self-sufficiency for themselves, or for any thing else. No sort of necessity can, therefore, lie here,—except what is more properly called *certainty*; the certainty of all things being what they are, and as they are, while they are so. The only necessity which can be ascribed to the material world, is the necessity of its being all in a state of immediate and absolute

* Eph. iv. 6. ; Rom. xi. 36.

† Eph. i. 11.

lute dependence on God; so as all things in it must be absolutely subservient to his pleasure, through an exertion of his own power in and by them. This, we own, is a very high necessity: The necessity that God should be God over all; and that creatures should be but creatures; and that all his purposes should be fulfilled by them, through his own disposal of them. But all this necessity, as respecting creatures, is neither solely nor any way founded in the nature of things; it is wholly founded in the sovereign will and power of God.

ART. II. *Of Contingency or Chance in the material World.*

§ I. Nothing is contingent, may be or may not be, with respect to God. He foresees whatever comes to pass, in all the circumstances of every thing; so that nothing can be to him unexpected, or unawares. The reason of this is, that he has decreed whatever comes to pass, in all the circumstances of every thing; and there is an infallible necessity, that all his decrees be accomplished: An infallible necessity of every event; as to its falling out according to his unchangeable will, through his own administration.

§ II. Many things are contingent, may be or may not be with respect to us. Many events or effects have no connection with, or are in no subjection to our will or power; so as we should have to act the part of second causes in bringing them about: But, besides this, there are many events or effects which we cannot in the least foresee; God bringing them about in such a secret and mysterious way, that we can perceive nothing of the gradual advance which matters are making toward such an issue. These things do

do therefore fall out contingently, unexpectedly, and surprizingly,—with respect to us. It holds of men, in this sense, that *time and chance happeneth to them all* *.

§ III. Every thing in the material world is absolutely contingent, may be, or may not be, with respect to all other things in it; considered abstractly from the continued interposition of the divine will and power. Thus considered, the material world bears no tolerable comparison to an elaborate engine or machine which a human artist has made and set a-going: It should rather be compared to a complete set of tools, with a proper stock of materials; which are nothing at all to each other, however nearly they may be lying together, but as the artist is presently employing them. Every cause is but as a tool in God's hand; and otherwise than as in his hand, his working hand, it can produce nothing. A chain of causes and effects in this world as in a going machinery, abstractly from a continued interposition of the divine will and power, is all a romance; there is no such thing, there can be no such thing in God's world,

As filings of iron will hang at a loadstone, each particle sticking to another for some length like a string or chain,—from its virtue passing through and influencing them all; but they fall asunder into their former condition, the moment they are separated from it: So the whole system, contexture, or chain of things in this world, is continually kept together and in its course by the power of God; and all things would necessarily fall to pieces, quite asunder, entirely loose, even into their original nothing,—if they were one moment separated from the divine influence, which is habitually passing through the whole.

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Such

* Eccl. ix. 11.

Such is the necessary and inconceivable dependence of all things on God, in their being and all their operations *.

§ IV. What is it that we call a *cause* and an *effect*? Just two things which we see always, or at least usually going together,—so as the one accompanies or follows upon the other; and in such a manner, that we readily expect the one to be with or from the other,—reckoning in many cases, that they could not be separated without a miracle. But how is the actual connection made up between these two; or how comes the one to influence, and the other to be influenced? Any man would but bewray his own folly, in pretending to account for all this; otherwise than by a stated interposition of the divine power or efficacious pleasure, such as is altogether above our comprehension. It is thus only that the
matter

* “ The existence of created substances, in each successive
“ moment, must be the effect of the *immediate* agency, will and
“ power of God. If any shall say,—that there is *no need* of any
“ immediate *divine* power, to produce the present existence
“ of created substances; but that their present existence is the
“ effect or consequence of past existence, according to the *na-*
“ *ture* of things; and that the established *course of nature* is
“ sufficient to *continue* existence, where existence is once given;
“ —I allow it: But then it should be remembered what *nature*
“ is in created things, and what the established *course of nature*
“ is; that—*it is nothing, separate from the agency of God*;—
“ nothing, but the established order of the agency and operation
“ of the Author of nature.”——

“ God’s *preserving* created things in being, is perfectly equivalent to a *continued creation*; or to his creating those things out of nothing, at *each moment* of their existence. If the continued existence of created things be wholly dependent on God’s preservation; then those things would drop into nothing upon the ceasing of the present moment, without a new exertion of the divine power to cause them to exist in the following moment.” EDWARDS on *Original Sin*; Part IV. Chap. II. III.

matter can be resolved: As we are to account for the actual connection between a tool and materials, —or the influence of the tool upon the materials, and the present subjection of the materials to that influence; we are to account for all this, from the skilful pleasure and power of the artist; in his present employing of the tool.

Among all that men call laws of nature, there is none more universal and invariable than *gravitation*, or the tendency of all material things to some centre; particularly, the tendency of matter about this earth to fall downward. But what is the cause of all this? The wisest philosophers find themselves obliged to resolve it wholly and immediately into a habitual interposal of the divine will, a habitual impression of the divine power*. And though, in many other cases, we can discern some secondary cause of an effect; yet the secondary cause must not be looked upon as supplying God's place: He must be no less the worker here, than where we can discern no secondary cause at all; while every such cause is nothing at all, in point of self-sufficiency.

§ V. The glorious Creator and Upholder of all things has settled an ordinary interposition of his will and power, as to the course of events in this world, or as to the wonderful train of causes and effects; according as his own counsel is to be thereby fulfilled. Yet he most easily can invert, and often has inverted this natural course of things, in his miraculous dispensations.

But besides, there are many things which may be
or

* "The mutual gravitation of bodies cannot be explained any other way, than by resolving it into the immediate operation of God; who never ceases to dispose and actuate his creatures, in a manner suitable to their respective beings." *Guardian* No. 126.

or may not be, without any miraculous inverting of the natural course; just as God pleases to interpose, one way or other. Thus, in a full consistency with the natural or settled course of things, and just as God pleases,—there may be or may not be a stormy wind, a destructive lightning and thunder, a deluge of rain, a season perniciously wet or dry, an inundation, an earthquake, a destroying pestilence; as, on the other hand, many singular favours of providence. All this we must allow, if we will properly allow that God is, that the world is his, and that he is in it; with a full latitude for frowning or smiling upon men in his providence, for dispensing blessings or judgments.

Upon the whole, we may safely conclude,—that there is no necessity in the material world, but such as leaves all things in it absolutely contingent with respect to each other, in themselves considered; no necessity in the abstract nature of things: No necessity but what turns all upon this glorious point,—the sovereign and continually efficacious will of God. “ God, by the bridle of his providence, turns what-
 “ ever events on whatever side he pleases: It is to
 “ be undoubtedly held, that all the turns which are
 “ to be observed in the world—do proceed from the
 “ secret motion of God’s hand: In the mean time,
 “ what God hath appointed is thus necessary to take
 “ place; yet so, as it is neither absolutely, nor in its
 “ own nature necessary *.

* *Calvin’s Institutions*, Book I. Chap. xvi. § 9.

S E C T. II.

Of Liberty and Necessity in the moral World, or the World of rational Creatures.

ART. I. *Of the Exercise of Man's rational Powers.*

§ I. THE human *will* is not a distinct agent; it is only a power of the rational soul, which is the agent: And it is inseparably connected with another great power, the *understanding*. When we say, that the understanding or will acts,—it is the same as to say, the soul acts in understanding and willing: It is the soul that understands, and the soul that wills. Nor can these different powers be separated from each other in their actings, more than any of them can be separated from the soul: Whenever the soul understands any thing, it has some will about the thing; and whenever the soul wills any thing, it has some understanding of the thing.

§ II. It is essential to a soul, to have a *moral disposition*; good or bad, or some mixture of both.

The new-fashioned morality, about what *ought* and *ought not* to be,—which is originally founded in self-love, or in social affections, or in a principle of sympathy, or in a sense of beauty and harmony, or in some feeling called the moral sense, or in the nature of things, or in the good of the whole; all this is an imaginary morality, which Christians should have no business with.

By the *moral disposition* of the soul, we mean the disposition which it has with respect to God as the supreme Lawgiver. A soul is not an independent being; unconcerned with all others, further than as it pleases to deal with them by understanding and willing:

willing : But it is necessarily, in its conscious nature, subjected to various relations ; the chief of which is, its relation to God in the above character. This is what no soul can be without some impression of: So as every soul must have some engrained disposition, respecting God as the supreme Lawgiver ; like the engrained disposition which some things of the material world have, to cleave unto or fly off from other things. It is utterly inconsistent with the nature of a soul, as a rational and conscious creature, to have any indifferency of disposition in this case ; a bias, one way or other, it must have.

§ III. The moral disposition of man's soul, at his original, was the image of God upon him ; in *righteousness* and *holiness* : Righteousness and holiness in the disposition of his nature ; a disposition for cleaving to God in the way of obedience,—and, at the same time, for embracing him as the chief good.

But a woful change was soon affected, in that manner which the scripture represents * : And the moral disposition of man's soul now, is just the reverse of what it was originally ; a disposition for flying off from God in the way of rebellion,—and, at the same time, for rejecting him as the chief good. This is such a change in the nature of souls, as if the bodies about this earth had been of an original tendency for flying upward to the sun ; but had afterwards degenerated into their present tendency, for falling downward to the earth. Whatever bias remains in man's heart toward any thing that is meet or morally good, in the concerns of human society ; yet, with respect to God, there is an universal depravity or corruption of human nature : So that the soul has naturally an engrained aversion from and enmity against God ; with a sort of gravitation

vation toward sensible and finite good, as its centre *.

The grace of God effectuates a remedy of this woful cause, in the experience of some. There is a begun restoration of their souls now, to be completed in the future state: And, in the souls of such, there is a mixture of the two opposite moral dispositions above-mentioned; sometimes the one prevailing, and sometimes the other.

§ IV.

* “When God made man at first, he implanted in him two kinds of principles. There was an *inferior* kind,—being the principles of mere human nature; such as self-love, with those natural appetites and passions which belong to the *nature of man*; in which his love to his own liberty, honour and pleasure, were exercised.—Besides these, there were *superior* principles; that were spiritual, holy and divine, summarily comprehended in divine love: Wherein consisted the image of God, and man’s righteousness and true holiness. These principles—*are above* those principles that are essentially implied in, or necessarily resulting from, and inseparably connected with *mere human nature*;—being such as immediately depend on man’s union and communion with God, or divine communications and influences of God’s Spirit: Which though withdrawn, and man’s nature forsaken of these principles; human nature will be human nature still.”——

“When man sinned,—immediately the superior divine principles wholly ceased; so light ceases in a room when the candle is withdrawn: And thus man was left in a state of darkness, woful corruption and ruin;—the inferior principles, which were given only to serve, being alone and left to themselves, *of course* became reigning principles.—Thus it is easy to give an account, how total corruption of heart should follow on man’s eating the forbidden fruit, though that was but one act of sin; without God’s putting any evil into his heart, or implanting any bad principle, or infusing any corrupt taint; and so becoming the *author* of depravity.”——

“As God withdrew spiritual communion and gracious influences from the common head; so he with-holds the same from all the members, as they come into existence: Whereby they come into the world,—entirely under the government of the natural and inferior principles, and so become wholly corrupt as *Adam* did.”——EDWARDS ON *Original Sin*; Part IV. Chap. II.

§ IV. The moral disposition which we have been speaking of, immediately respects the *will*; but it also concerns the *understanding*.—If a man have his face turned straight toward the sun, in a clear day, with open eyes; he then has a direct view of the sun, by a fulness of its light entering directly into his eyes: But if he afterwards turn his back on the sun, he immediately loses all that view; and loses all enjoyment of the sun's light, except by reflection from other objects. So it is, in the present case; according to the lame and faint resemblance of earthly to spiritual things. In the original moral disposition of man's soul, his face was straight toward God, the sun of souls: The glorious light of the divine perfections did thus shine directly into his understanding, impressing upon him the image of God in *knowledge*; and enabling him to behold the glory of God in direct views, as also in taking up the full reflections of it from all the creatures. But, in the corrupt moral disposition of man's soul, the case is all otherwise: His back is turned upon God, he has no direct view of God, and he cannot properly take up the reflection of the divine glory from the creatures; his understanding is filled with darkness, ignorance, vanity, weakness, and error.—Yet the grace of God delivers from this power of darkness; enduing some with various measures of saving light here, in order to a fulness of it hereafter.

§ V. The moral disposition of man's soul, as it respects both the will and understanding, has a governing influence upon the will in all its moral actings; in all those actings which respect the supreme Lawgiver and his law, as to matters of sin and duty. The moral disposition lies not primarily in the understanding or in the will, considered as powers of the

the soul; far less does it so lie in any exercise of these powers: But it is an engrained quality of the soul itself, lying at the root of these powers in their exercise. And it is evident, that, according to what is the prevailing moral disposition of the soul, accordingly must be the moral actings of the will: According to what sort of a heart a man has, accordingly must be the exercise of his heart and the tenor of his behaviour,—in matters of moral good and evil. It was to this purpose that our Lord said,—*Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit: A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit; nor can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit**.

§ VI. In all the actings of the human will, under whatever moral disposition, it acts from some consideration of motives: That is, the soul willeth as a reasonable being, having some reason or other for its willing so. If a man's will can ever act so capriciously or whimsically, as to proceed upon no reason at all; in that case the man acts irrationally, and such acting can be of no account in the moral world. A self-determining power of the will, abstractly from or against all motives or reasons, is a gross absurdity: No such power can be consistent with rationality; seeing the will is not a distinct agent, but a power of the rational soul as such.

§ VII. No motives whatever, the strongest more than the weakest, the best more than the worst,—can have any sort or degree of influence upon the will, so far as these motives are without us. Till a motive be in the mind or understanding, it is nothing at all to the will; it is to the will as if it were

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* Matth. vii. 16, 17, 18.

not at all: And the soul, in its willing, cannot possibly proceed upon reasons which to it are not; as is the case of reasons which it has no understanding of. An object not in the mind, which is an object unknown,—cannot be an object of desire, or fear, or any inclination at all in the will. All that can be said, then, about the human will having any concern with motives, or about these motives having any concern with the human will,—as they are motives placed without us; all this is no better than a visionary romance, quite alien from the real state of human nature.

§ VIII. Let us see how the case stands with motives, upon their getting into the mind, or becoming the objects of the understanding. Even then, these motives can have no manner of influence upon the will, nor the will have any thing ado with them, as they are in themselves; but only as they are in the understanding: And no motives whatever can make a full appearance, according to all their own nature and importance, in the understanding of any man on this side of time; because of the imperfection which must cleave to his understanding, at its best, in the present life. When motives, therefore, are in the mind, they influence the will, or the will has ado with them, only as they are in the mind; under all the disadvantages which they have from the darkness, weakness, and errors of the understanding.

§ IX. Beside this subjection which motives are under to the corrupt understanding, they have a great deal of further disadvantage from the corruption of the will. The moral disposition which is now natural to men, puts the will upon a bias of opposition to all moral good as such,—to God and all that is God-ward; an opposition which is too strong for all
contrary

contrary motives in the understanding, too strong for every thing but the supernatural grace of God. And even in matters which are not directly of a moral kind, as to sin and duty,—but immediately concern our own interest; the darkness of the understanding is accompanied with a perverseness and folly of the will, which often stands out against any contrary force that motives get from the understanding. The will is naturally *serviug diverse lusts and pleasures* *; so as it bids defiance, in many cases, to considerations of both duty and interest.

Thus, as it is ordinary for men to have false views of things, or motives falsely stated in their minds: It is likewise ordinary for the will to act in opposition to light or conviction in the understanding, or to those motives which have the chief advantage there; not merely from an influence of some contrary motives,—but more especially from the engrained corruption of the moral disposition, which gives the prevailing advantage to these.

§ X. What is now the amount of all this? The direct reverse of what is taught by the *Essayer*, about motives. He says †, “If motives be not under our power or direction, which is confessedly the fact; we can, at bottom, have no liberty.” But who has confessed this to be a fact, about motives? No Calvinist, certainly, or any real Christian, ever did.

If the language here have any sense, motives are spoken of as they are in themselves. To say that motives are not under our power, considered as they are stated in our understanding, and as our moral disposition is affected toward them;—would be to speak nonsense: As it would be a saying, upon the matter, that our understanding is not in our power, that

* Tim. iii. 3. † P. 125.

that our disposition is not in our power,—that our power is not in our power; that it is not in our power to be other than we are, while we are as we are, according to whatever is the present modification of our being.

But considering motives as they are in themselves, they are all under our power or direction; just as much as any workman's tools are under his power and direction. They are nothing to the will, but as the understanding, with all its imperfections, makes them to be; and even then, they are nothing to the will, but as its moral disposition admits them to be. It is essential to the soul, to be exercising its will; and it is essential to the will, to be working from and through the consideration of some motive or other as its tools: But as to which of these tools it uses, when a variety of them is at hand,—and as to how or how far it uses them; all this depends ultimately upon the moral disposition, and not upon the tools or motives as considered in themselves.

Spirits, whose disposition is perfectly good, can be no way wrought upon by the very strongest of bad motives,—as angels; and spirits whose disposition is perfectly bad, can be no way wrought upon by the very strongest of good motives,—as devils: And all men are in some approach, in this matter, toward the condition of angels or of devils. As to moral good and evil, all motives good and bad, the strongest and weakest of either, are proceeded upon by the will, or rather are employed by it,—just according to the moral disposition of the soul: As a workman's tools take effect, not according to the best or worst that could be done by them, or that their own natures are capable of being employed to do; but just according to the particular cast of the workman.

ART. II. *Of Man's Dependence on God as a rational Creature.*

§ I. The view of our condition as rational creatures, with respect to God,—is what we need to enter upon with fear and trembling; considering our utter incapacity for fathoming the deep things of God, with a great danger of thinking and speaking amiss about his absolute sovereignty over us.

It must be admitted, that a soul has as much dependence on God for its continued subsistence as any piece of matter has. His omnipotence continually upholds it in being, from one moment to another; *for in him we live,—and have our being*: Nor is this all, *for in him also we move* *; in him are all the motions of our souls, as well as of our bodies. There can be no real being, but from the one infinite Being; and therefore, so far as any action of a soul has a reality of being, it must be from him. If any action of a soul are wholly its own, wholly from itself; the soul would be independent of God in that action, which is impossible: As there can be no self-being, in any circumstance, beside him.

§ II. According to the doctrine of Calvinists, there is a *precourse* or *predetermination* of the divine power, with respect to every action of a soul; exciting and disposing it to that action, in a subservience to his own eternal and unchangeable counsels: And there is a *concourse* of the divine power,—working in and with the soul, unto a producing of the action and its effect: And there is an *ordering* of the divine power, according to infinite wisdom,—as to all the ends of the action and effect; often very different from, yea contrary to the designs of the creature.

Thus,

* Acts xvii. 28.

Thus, with respect to souls as well as bodies, the spiritual as well as material world,—the infinite One is *all in all*: All-sufficiency and Self-sufficiency are his glorious prerogatives; while no self-sufficiency, more than all-sufficiency, for any thing,—can belong to created spirits, more than to matter.

§ III. If one enquire, How can these things be? How can God exercise such an absolute disposal of the human will, by his influence and ordering of circumstances, for the accomplishing of his own purposes,—in a consistency with the nature of the human will? The proper answer is, We cannot tell. So the case is, so it must be; yet a comprehending how it is or can be so, lies far above the reach of creatures. But though this be incomprehensible by us, there is no reason that it should also be incredible by us. How little can we determine, about the manner of operation which belongs to the first cause; when we can determine so little about that of second causes, even about the manner of operation which belongs to our own souls?

The glorious First Cause is so infinitely above any second cause, so infinitely different from it, that there can be no inferring between the two; no inconsistency of each being an immediate and total cause of the same effect, each after its kind. A finite will cannot but have room enough in the ocean of the infinite will,—room enough for all possible shiftings, traversings, or roamings: Without any hazard of ever dashing on a rock or shore, any hazard of meeting with a rub; of ever finding itself under any forcible constraint or restraint, from the universal superintendency of the divine will and power.

As it is certain, on the one hand, that the infinite Being is no less independent in his disposing of all creatures and all their actions, than if there were no human

human will below him; so it is equally certain, on the other hand, that men are no less free in their actions, than if there were no divine will above them. For all the freedom which can possibly belong to rational creatures, is that of acting according to their inclinations: And when they act wickedly, from corrupt inclinations; they do thereby, on the matter, justify God,—in taking all the blame of their wickedness to themselves, as their free choice.

Moreover, it would be grossly blasphemous to imagine, that the will of God and the will of man could, in any case, be mutually independent of each other; as it would be an ascribing of godhead to the creature, in that case. And may we hesitate a moment about determining, whether man's will should be reckoned in every case dependent on God's; or God's will, in any case, dependent on man's? We must find an ocean of mysteries, overwhelming our mind, in the import and consequences of a determination on God's behalf; yet a determining on the other side would be even more blasphemous, than an ascribing of independency to man?

ART. III. *Of Man's Dependence on God as a sinful Creature.*

§ I. The human soul has a peculiar dependence on God, in its moral condition; with regard to his *permission* of sin. To say enough, for clearing up all the mystery of that matter, is above the capacity of every man: Our farthest enquiry into this, as well as the other deep things of God, must ever leave us to cry out; *How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out* *!—And to say all that could be said on it, must lead to an use of terms and distinctions

* Rom. xi. 43.

tinctions which would be unintelligible, or unedifying to the generality of readers.

Besides, there could not be proper room here for considering the subject in all its extent. A few things only shall be proposed, for giving some general view of the matter: And for vindicating the HOLY ONE, from the imputation of being the *author of sin*; which can never be done, if his *permitting* sin be the same thing with *causing* it: If the case were as the *Essayist* would have it,—that “with regard to
“ the First Cause, PERMITTING is the same thing
“ with CAUSING; since against his will nothing can
“ happen *.”

§ II. God's permission of sin is *most wise*.—When he was pleased to create two worlds of reasonable beings, angels and men; their natures could not admit of any self-sufficiency for maintaining their original perfection, more than for maintaining their existence: And he saw meet that this should be evident, not only in speculation but also in fact; by permitting some angels, and all men to fall †. Thus, there

* P. 140.

† The continuance of angels, as well as of the first man, in their primitive integrity,—was necessarily to depend, every moment, upon a continual and unremitted influence of divine power; for carrying out their upright *habits* into *exercise*, as to every particular act of obedience: According to what has been formerly observed. Part I. Chap. III. § IV. V. VI.

When this divine influence was suspended, as to the angels who fell,—it was continued upon all others of that celestial family; which they certainly found in themselves, and thankfully acknowledged, to have been wholly owing to the sovereign and distinguished grace of God. But it was not till the fall of some, that the rest were put into a state of confirmation; bearing an assurance to them,—that they should never be left so to fall, through a suspending of that influence. This confirmation appears to have taken place, immediately upon their finding themselves

there is a standing and awful monument of that self-insufficiency which is essential to even the highest finitenature: While his incommunicable self-sufficiency is displayed in the highest manner, with an awful glory of his absolute sovereignty. And the state of sin which men have fallen into is ordered, by his manifold wisdom, unto the most glorious end; infinitely above and contrary to its natural tendency. It is made to issue in so high a dispensation of his goodness, and so high a manifestation of his glory, *through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ*,—as could not have taken place in a world of innocent men.

§ III. God's permission of sin is *most just*.—It was not from justice, but from absolute and adorable sovereignty, that the first sin was permitted. Yet, upon man's becoming sinful, it became a matter of justice with God to permit sin; to leave men, more and more, to themselves, as a punishment of their apostacy from him *. And it is a matter of thankful

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admiration,

selves graciously preserved from yielding to temptation by those who fell. And there appears no impropriety in supposing, that the case might have been the same with the first man; had God been pleased so to preserve him under his first temptation: When once he should thus have found by thankful experience, as the confirmed angels had done in their case,—that his standing was wholly in and from God. Part I. Chap. IV. § V.

* “As for these wicked and ungodly men, whom God as a righteous judge, for former sins, doth blind and harden: From them he not only withholdeth his grace, whereby they might have been enlightened in their understandings, and wrought upon in their hearts; but sometimes also withdraweth the gifts which they had, and exposeth them to such objects as their corruption makes occasion of sin; and withal, gives them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan; whereby it comes to pass that they harden themselves, even under those means which God useth for softening others.” *Westminster Confession*; Chap. V. § 6.

admiration, that he has not proceeded farther in this righteous judgment; that he has not left the world of men to become utterly abandoned, absolutely incapable of any moral government.

§ IV. God's permission of sin is *most holy*.—He is of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity *, as either in the least agreeable or indifferent to him. It is the object of his highest detestation and wrath, as is abundantly testified in the Scriptures; testified also in the judicial dispensations of his providence, and in those dictates of his judgment which he has formed the natural conscience for pronouncing.

§ V. God's permission of sin does not imply any influence or efficiency as to the sin permitted.—When it is said that, “with regard to the First Cause, *permitting* is the same thing with *causing* ;” if the words have any sense, it is an *efficient* or *effective* causing that must be meant. It is only this sort of causing that any ever opposed, or could oppose, to permitting: And if only a *permissive* causing were meant, the assertion would bear this ridiculous form,—that “with regard to the First Cause, *permitting* “ is the same thing with *permitting* ;” which is as much true of every cause, it is the same with itself.

§ VI. It is readily acknowledged, that permitting and causing may agree in some respects; as many different things will do. They may agree, as to the infallibility of the event which is permitted or caused; its being as infallible in the one case, as in the other. They may also agree, in one's being chargeable with and answerable for what he permits, as well as what he causes: But this can only be, where
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* Hab. i. 13.

the permitter is under a previous obligation of duty not to permit the thing; which none will venture to say of God.—Yet an agreement in such respects, can never make permitting and causing the same thing in their nature. The permitting of a thing by a suspension of power, and the causing of a thing by an exertion of power,—are as different matters as two and four; and can never possibly become the same thing coalescing into the same idea.

§ VII. The reason given for saying so of the *First Cause* only, that “against his will nothing can possibly happen,” is a reason of no consequence; as the like will hold in some cases, of other causes also, where no such consequence will be pretended.—For instance, a stone is lying at one’s foot; and it cannot possibly happen, in the present circumstances, that the stone should be up from the ground, unless he take it up;—nor can it possibly happen, in the present circumstances, after the stone is up in his hand, that it shall be on the ground again, unless he let it fall: But will this say, that his taking it up and letting it fall is the same thing; that the exertion of his power in the one case, is the same thing with his withdrawing of it in the other? Again, while the sun is shining freely in our sky, it cannot possibly happen but that we should have a day; nor can it possibly happen, while the sun is withdrawn from our sky, but that we should have a night: Yet who would imagine, that permitting and causing are the same thing here; that the sun is effective in permitting the night-darkness, as well as in producing the day-light.

§ VIII. There was a most glorious efficiency of the First Cause, in producing all this world out of nothing. Now, supposing that the world, or some
part

part of it, should be annihilated, or should return to its original nothing; could there be any efficiency of the First Cause in permitting this? It is a thing which could not possibly happen against his will; yet there could be no room here, for any influence or efficacy of his power. His power continually upholds every creature in being, and it has no self-being for him to destroy; the destruction of its being, or its dropping into nothing, could not therefore be from an efficiency,—but only from a withdrawing of his power. It would be proper to say that he *permitted* it; but it would have a blasphemous sound, to say that he *caused* it; As if the creature had some other being than what depends on his upholding, which could not be abolished by a mere withdrawing of his power. There must, then, be always a most essential difference, betwixt God's *permitting* and *causing*.

§ IX. The object of God's permission is not, precisely, a *sinful action*; but the *sin*, or *sinfulness* of that action. The action, as the action of a reasonable creature, or as it bears the common nature of action,—is the object of his *efficiency*, concurring with the efficiency of the creature; according to what has been already said upon the general point, of man's dependence on God as a rational creature. Yet the sin, or sinfulness of the action, is a quality of it which does not properly bear the nature of *being*, but of *not-being*: It is of the nature of want, defect, or privation; and this, in the moral case of a rational creature, which cannot possibly be indifferent as to good or evil,—necessarily implies contrariety and opposition to the matter of that want, defect, or privation. Now, such a thing is a proper object of permission, but there is a gross absurdity in supposing that it could be an object of efficiency or production,

duction,—that God's permitting it can be the same thing with his causing it. The sinfulness of a man, and of his actions, is a sort of annihilation,—a dropping so far back into nothing with respect to the moral condition which God placed him in at first: And no sort of annihilation could be from any influence or efficiency of the divine power, it could only proceed from a withdrawing of it. Accordingly, man's sinful state is properly called a *fallen state*; and though there must be an influence of power in raising up and keeping up, there can be no influence of power in letting fall.

There must always, then, be a most essential difference betwixt God's *permitting* sin and his *causing* it. A causing of it would necessarily make him answerable for it as its author; and could not consist with his infinite holiness, his absolute detestation and hatred of sin: But his permitting it can consist with all this; when he makes the permission subservient to most valuable, most wise and holy ends.

§ X. Whatever God permits, infallibly takes place.—It is not as when man permits a thing to be; which, upon that permission, may or may not be *. Even all this world would infallibly drop back into nothing, were God to withdraw his upholding power

* “ The Almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite
 “ goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in his providence,
 “ that it extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sins
 “ of angels and men; and that not by a bare permission, but
 “ such as hath joined with it a most wise and powerful bound-
 “ ing, ordering and governing of them, in a manifold dispensa-
 “ tion, to his own holy ends: Yet so, as the sinfulness thereof
 “ proceedeth only from the creature, and not from God; who
 “ being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the au-
 “ thor or approver of sin.”—*Westminster Confession*; Chap. v.

power for a moment; and as infallible is the consequence of withdrawing or with-holding his power from man; in what respects his moral condition,—while the creature can be or do nothing independently of him. Thus, it is not only true, that nothing can possibly happen against his will; but it is as true, that nothing can possibly happen without his will. He wills that sin should take place: But it is not properly man's sinning that he wills; it is properly his own permission of it that he wills, with his most holy and wise ordering of it to the ends of his own glory.

And so, upon the whole, a state of absolute and continual dependence on God runs through all things in the moral, as well as in the material world: All things are most wisely ordered, by a continual dispensation of his power and permission, for the accomplishment of his eternal and unalterable counsels; beside, beyond, or below which, nothing can take place.

ART. IV. *Of moral Necessity.*

§ I. It is easy, from what has been said, to understand what sort of *necessity* belongs to the *moral* world; concerning the power and exercise of the human will. We have seen that there is no sort of necessity from any *motives* whatsoever, considered as they lie without us: Yea, even after these motives come into us, into our mind,—the will is in no subjection to them, considered as they are in themselves, but only as presented by the mind, and according to the moral disposition of the will.

§ II. There is a sort of intrinsic or constitutional necessity, both from the reasonable and moral state of human nature.—Man is under a necessity of acting

ing some way as a reasonable creature, while he is, and so far as he is such; of acting as a creature endued with an understanding and will. Again, he is under a necessity of acting as a sinful creature; while he is, and so far as he is such. From his natural corruption, the darkness and enmity which now belong to his moral disposition, he is in a state of spiritual bondage; a slave to many foolish and hurtful lusts, and thus subjected to the power of Satan.—But all this is more properly a *certainty* than a *necessity*: A certainty of man's being what he is, and as he is, while he is so.

§ III. The only other sort of necessity in the moral world, as in the material world,—is the necessity of being in a state of absolute dependence on God. And what is this but the necessity of being only a creature, under a supreme and continued disposal of his glorious Creator; who most inconceivably exercises a sovereign and universal dominion over the human will, without any encroachment on its nature?

ART. V. *Of moral Liberty.*

§ I. The human will, as we have seen, is in a state of absolute freedom with respect to all motives; both as they are without us, and as they are in themselves. The will has no concern with motives, but as the understanding states them and makes them to be: And then the will proceeds upon them, not simply according to how they are so stated and made; but mainly according to what prevails in its moral disposition.

§ II. As to the necessity of man's willing and acting in conformity to his apprehensions and disposition;

tion; this, in a general view of it, is fully consistent with all the liberty which can belong to a rational nature. The infinite Being necessarily wills and acts according to the absolute perfection of his nature, yet with the highest liberty; angels necessarily will and act according to the perfection of their natures, yet with full liberty: For this sort of necessity is so far from interfering with liberty of will, that the perfection of the will's liberty lies in such a necessity. The very essence of its liberty lies in acting consciously, chusing or refusing, without any external compulsion or constraint; but according to inward principles, of rational apprehension and natural disposition: So that this necessity, as to the will, is just the necessity of its freedom or liberty.

§ III. With respect to man's will, in his fallen and corrupt estate,—all the liberty still belongs to it, which possibly can belong to a rational creature. For the highest liberty imaginable of a creature's will, is the liberty of conscience acting according to his inward apprehensions and disposition; whatever these be: The highest imaginable liberty of will in a rational agent, is the liberty of *doing as he pleases*.

As to the spiritual bondage and slavery which belongs to man's natural estate; this doth not properly affect the liberty of his will, but the integrity and power of his soul. For all his natural propensity to evil, takes effect in the way of *inclination*; and all his natural inability for what is truly good, takes effect in the way of *disinclination*: So that his will still acts with all the liberty which can belong to a will; as it acts according to the apprehensions and disposition of his soul.

And thus, when the grace of God restores a soul, it no way alters this essential manner of the will's acting; it makes no change or improvement as to
that

that liberty which belongs to the nature of a will: But it renews the will in renewing the soul; renewing the soul, as to that darkness and enmity which belong to its moral disposition.

§ IV. If we further enquire into the liberty of man's will, as it stands in relation to God,—we may still find that it enjoys all the liberty which can possibly belong to the will of a rational creature; all that liberty which we have been just now describing. The manner of God's dominion over the human will (as to his influence, with-holding, withdrawing, and ordering of circumstances), is what we cannot pretend to explain: But this we may be sure of concerning it; that it leaves man's will as free in its manner of acting, as free from any contradiction to its nature, as if there were no will at all above it.

Man's will never acted, never could act more freely, than in his first transgression; as the with-holding of divine influence, in that awful case, committed no sort of violence upon his will,—made no sort of encroachment on its natural liberty. God did not then withdraw any thing that he had actually bestowed on man; but left him with a fulness of that ability by which he might have stood: He only with-held, in awful sovereignty, that continued emanation of divine influence, without which no habitual powers could be sufficient for his actual standing; yet still making no sort of encroachment on his liberty of will.

And this may be illustrated by an ordinary case in life.—One makes a question, whether he should dress and go out; or rather keep his room. In the event, he keeps his room. From this it appears, that God (*in whom we move*) with held the secret providential influence which would have determin-

ed him on the other side. Yet all the time he is staying in, he is fully conscious of his having the same ability for going out as if he had been actually doing so; and that God's mysterious disposal of his inclination, as to the event, leaves him all the liberty of will that he could imagine,—for *doing as he pleases*.

And as it was in the case of man's first transgression, so it is still; that God's withholding and withdrawing, and all the exercise of his dominion over the human will, doth no way change its nature or impair its liberty,—more than if there were no such thing at all on God's part.

§ V. A man can therefore have no excuse for his sin, from God's permission; or from any exercise of God's dominion over his will. His sin, notwithstanding of this, must be of a criminal and punishable nature.

He neglects a duty, he commits a sin,—with all the voluntary freedom which a creature is capable of. The corrupt disposition to which he is a slave, is all his own, what God never made; and he loves to have it so. What he wills, in sinning, is what God wills not,—cannot will: And he sins in contradiction to God's preceptive will, made known to him in the dictates of conscience; but more fully in the holy Scriptures. He sins, not from any respect to the divine permission, or to God's sovereign dominion over him; but from a respect only to the dictates of his own corrupt disposition: So that he sins as if there were no Lord over him; having this for the material language of his ungodly disposition*.

All therefore that can possibly belong to the nature of criminalness, of accountableness, of punishableness,

* Psal. xii. 4.; xiv. 1.

ableness, belongs to man's sin. And there could be nothing more unreasonable than to allege the contrary: Unless one could maintain an utter impossibility of there being such a thing as a reasonable creature, an object of God's moral dominion; an utter impossibility of the plainest fact! Or unless one could maintain,—that blamableness and punishableness in any actions of reasonable creatures, is utterly inconsistent with God's sovereignty over them and their actions; that is, utterly inconsistent with the being of a God!

CONCLUSION.

§ I. The *Essayist* teaches, That *universal necessity is the true system of nature, the real plan of the universe* *: And this he teaches, concerning a necessity which he supposes to lie in the nature and constitution of things. But, after what has been said, we may justly affirm the very reverse: That, according to the nature and constitution of things; abstracting from the continual presidence and interposition of the divine will and power,—*universal liberty and contingency is the true system of nature, the real plan of the universe.*

§ II. As the *Essayist* tells us,—that “ whoever hath just ideas, and a true taste of philosophy will “ see” his scheme of necessity “ to be the real theory of the universe:” So he affirms “ that, upon “ any other theory, there can be no general order, “ no whole, no plan, no means nor end in its administration †.” But another theory, extremely different, has been now proposed: And whatever any think of the Author's ideas or taste of philosophy, he may affirm without any scruple,—that this universe

* P. 140, 159.

† P. 154.

verse can have no general order, no whole, no plan, no means nor end of its administration,—except upon the theory which he has proposed; the theory of the subjection of all things to the continual interposition of the will and power of the INFINITE ONE, connecting and managing all things according to his ONE MIND in his everlasting counsels.

§ III. The *Essayer* informs us, concerning his scheme of necessity especially as it respects the moral world,—that “it is not otherwise discoverable but by deep thinking, and by a long chain of abstract reasoning;” and “would to us be a dead secret, were it not brought to light by a long and painful reasoning: And hence the ignorance, almost universal, of our being necessary agents *.”

But the case is quite otherwise, as to that necessity which really takes place in both the material and moral world. It is no other, than the necessity of all things being what they are and as they are while they are so: And the necessity of man’s being a rational creature, willing and acting according to his apprehensions and disposition; with the necessity of the absolute and continued dependence of all things on God, as ordering all things according to his own pleasure. Now there is nothing here (in the matter of fact) to lie a dead secret, till it be brought to light by the painful labours of an acute and penetrating philosopher: Nothing that any sober Christian can be ignorant of; nothing but what is most obvious to every ploughman, who has the fear of God in his heart.

§ IV. All the natural and common sense that men have, of contingency in events and liberty in actions,

* P. 134.

tions, is represented by the *Essayer* as a *delusive sense*, not agreeing to the truth of things,—yet an *original law in our nature* *. But it may plainly appear from what has been said, that such a representation is absolutely groundless: As all the sense of contingency and liberty which any man has or can have, consistently with his living in the fear of God, is fully agreeable to what we have shown is the real and most intimate truth of things; having nothing in it of delusion or deceit, imposed by God on human nature.

§ V. The doctrine of necessity in the *Essay*, is pretended to be of great merit; as making a full end of the *Arminian* doctrine about *free will*. And it really does so. But alas! at a vast expence: At no lower expence, in its native tendency,—than that of burying *Arminianism*, with all the valuable things of *Christianity* which have been mentioned, in one common grave; *Arminian* liberty, and *Calvinist* liberty going to the pot together.

Calvinists have taken a way of contending against the *Arminian* scheme of free will, which is quite sufficient; and, at the same time, quite agreeable to Christianity. Their way of it lies generally in these three things: In asserting the will to be a power of the rational soul, which cannot possibly be exercised but as such; in asserting the corruption of human nature; and in asserting the absolute subjection of every man's will, to the sovereign will of God.

But the fatal way taken in the *Essay*, for overthrowing *Arminian* liberty, lies in subjecting both the will of God and the will of man to the will of an universal necessity in the laws of nature,—which God is said to have established, without retaining any control over them; a necessity pretended to reign
with

* P. 151, 152. 159.

with absolute and sovereign control, throughout the vast machine of this universe: And so turning all sense of liberty into a delusion, through a horrible assault on the natural rights of both God and man!

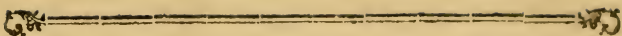
GENERAL

GENERAL RECOLLECTION.

THE great *scope* of all the foregoing *Contemplations* is, to illustrate and celebrate this glorious truth,—the centre and sum, the *Alpha* and *Omega* of all truth; that GOD IS ALL IN ALL:—That he is ALL, by continual dispensations of sovereignty and justice and grace, IN ALL the world of mankind, as to their spiritual and everlasting concerns; according to the TWO COVENANTS which have been VIEWED: And that he is ALL continually IN ALL the world of nature, by an incessant maintaining of the existence and operations of all his creatures; with an incessant disposing thereof for his own glory, according to the good pleasure of his will.

Unto him be glory in the Church by CHRIST JESUS, throughout all ages, world without end.
AMEN.

F I N I S.



A N
A P P E N D I X

T O

The Book published at Edinburgh, in August 1786,

I N T I T L E D,

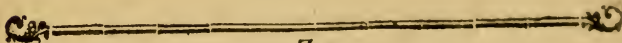
[SACRED CONTEMPLATIONS.]

C O N T A I N I N G;

EXPLICATIONS of DIFFICULTIES, which have been
proposed to the Author on some Passages of that
Book:

- I. About the Character of JESUS CHRIST as GOD-MAN.
- II. About *Matters of Futurity* to Men (particularly as the
Death of Christ was under the Old-Testament Dispensa-
tion), being *Matters of Fact* to God.
- III. About the *Perfection* of the redeemed, in the State of
eternal Glory.

Veritas in Puteo est.



Z z

A P P E N D I X.

I. *About the Character of JESUS CHRIST as GOD-MAN.* Part II. Period I. Sect. II. § II.

1st, **W**ITH regard to what JESUS said of himself to the Jews (*John* viii. 58.) *Before Abraham was I AM*; an application of this to him as GOD-MAN, doth indeed represent him to have been such from eternity: For nothing less can be the import of his having been so at all, in any one moment before his actual incarnation.

2^{dly}, Whatever difficulty we can be in about that application, —there appears to be no midst betwixt admitting it, and a conceiving that our Lord imposed upon his hearers by a fallacious declaration. They were warranted, they were obliged to believe that he was then speaking of himself in his then visible state; the *Jesus of Nazareth* whom they then saw and heard: While the declaration was plainly made for informing them that *HE, Jesus of Nazareth, was God-man*; as the declaration would be true concerning him, only according to that consideration of him. He would not have been speaking candidly or honestly, if he had only meant himself as a person of the Godhead whom they never saw; when his way of speaking necessarily obliged them to believe, that he meant himself then visible among them. He was then appearing in the character of the *Son of God* as *God-man*; while otherwise he could not be *God* as he is *God-man*, because it is *God the Son* who hath become so.

3^{dly}, His incarnation did take place only at a certain moment of time, after about 4000 years of it had elapsed. His *manhood*, he as *man*, did not exist till then; and till then, nothing could be present to him as *man*: But this cannot mean, that nothing was till then present to him as *God-man*; without making this divine person a temporal, and so a finite Being. His whole eternal now, as an infinite Being, must coincide with every moment of time; as well that in which *Abraham* was,

as that in which he became man. The manhood which he assumed could detract nothing from his divine character; and therefore HE, the divine person *God-man*, could not be thereby degraded into the rank of successive duration. He did not always exist, nor is he every where present as *man*; but He always existed, and is every where present as *God-man*: While his *Godhead* was actually related to his *manhood* from all eternity; though it was only in time, that his manhood became actually related to his Godhead. The moment of his becoming man could never be either future or past (but eternally present) to him as *God-man*; more than the place where he was and now is as *man*, can be a place of confinement to him as *God-man*. It was *God* (*God-man*) who laid down his life for us: *God*; with whom *is*, and *was*, and *will be*,—are all one and the same.

We cannot comprehend these things, but we must believe them. For to refuse that he meant himself as *God-man*, in what he said to the Jews about his being before Abraham was, could be nothing less than a giving him the lie in what he then said of himself to them; while HE was evidently speaking of himself, not in respect of one or other nature,—but of his whole person as *God-man*.

II. *About Matters of Futurity to men (particularly as the death of Christ was under the Old-Testament Dispensation), being Matters of Fact to God.* Part II. Period II. *Introduction.*

1st, The Author of the *Contemplations* must rest in the most self-consistent and satisfying apprehensions which he can attain to, of that INFINITE BEING whom he cannot comprehend; according to the dictates of Scripture and reason concerning him: without any prescribing to others beyond the same rule. These his apprehensions cannot admit the sentiment,—that the presence of all things to God, from eternity, means only a presence in respect of *knowledge*; excluding a presence of all things to him in respect of *being* or *existence*, but as these things actually come to have this. That the matter has been so understood in the church hitherto, is what he hath not known nor observed; and this opinion, when suggested to him, is what he doth not find himself capable of digesting.—He believes indeed that all things have, with respect to God, hath an *esse cognitum* (a known existence) and an *esse reale* (a real existence); but he believes that they have both of these, as to God, at one and the same moment:

That

That though all things, particularly when in themselves future things, do not *coexist* with him; yet he always *coexists* with every one of them. AS HE IS THE FIRST, HE IS, at the same time, WITH THE LAST, *Isa.* xli. 4.

2dly, The duration of the divine existence is from eternity to eternity; according to our finite way of conceiving eternity, both before and after this world. But the divine duration must be considered as wholly a permanent and ever present NOW; no more capable of distinction into parts than the divine existence itself. God is, in his nature and name, absolutely and invariably,—the great I AM. This also indeed belongs to his name,—*which is, which was, and which is to come*: Yet all such difference or distinction of persons to us, must be as nothing at all to him; all coinciding in the one indivisible point of his eternal now. As the present I AM of the divine *existence* doth at once and indivisibly fill, so the present now of the divine *duration* doth at once and indivisibly comprehend,—all eternity and all time.

3dly, It cannot therefore be admitted,—that things *future* to us are *present* to God, only in respect of *knowledge*: As if HE and his present now were then at some distance from the future *time* and *being* of these things.—All the future objects of faith and hope, are present to a christian in respect of knowledge,—on the divine Testimony concerning them: And an eclipse to take place, though many years hence, is present to an astronomer in respect of knowledge,—on his just and infallible calculation thereof. But it is in an infinitely higher sense, that things future to us are present to God. Though the *esse cognitum* and the *esse reale* of future things, may lie at a great distance from one another as to us; yet these can lie at no distance at all from one another as to him, in his INFINITE BEING and ETERNAL NOW: While he at once possesseth all time and all eternity; and things *future* to us cannot but be *matters of fact* to him, while he already *coexists* with their becoming such to us.

4thly, From what has now been explained, the Author thought himself sufficiently warranted to say, concerning Christ's fulfilling the condition of the Covenant by his obedience unto death,—“that though this was, for many ages a matter of futurity to men, it was not so to God;” but that, particularly under the Old-Testament dispensation, “the death of Christ was a *matter of fact* in divine reckoning:” God reckoning of it most truly, as then having existence to him; though it was not to have so in itself, or to man, till many ages afterwards.

When the Author offers to think,—that, under the Old-Testament dispensation, God looked forward to that great event

went as a matter of futurity to him, proceeding then upon the credit of it as infallibly to take place in due time; he cannot keep his mind from shrinking at the thought: As, in his view, it appears to be a reducing of the INFINITE BEING into some state of finite apprehension and successive duration. He has supposed it to be an universally settled point, with regard to the true God,—that nothing could ever be, in any sense, a matter of futurity to him; and he can conceive no midst betwixt this, and the being a matter of fact.

5^{thly}, Whatever apparent, there is no real inconsistency of all this view with the Scripture terms rendered *foreknow* and *foreknowledge*,—in any signification which they can really bear concerning God. There is nothing more common in Scripture, than God's speaking of himself to men after the manner of men; speaking to them in the language, not of eternity, but of time—as their finite minds are capable of conceiving. We can conceive of God in his administrations,—only as carrying on successive performances in time, of his purposes from eternity. But the Scripture sufficiently guards us, against thinking that he is altogether such an one as ourselves; as if a real distinction of purposes, and really distinct apprehensions of their future performances as then at a distance from him,—could be competent to his infinite mind.

What has been set forth on this subject, is indeed a mystery; the *nature* of which we cannot comprehend,—more than we can by searching find out God, or find out the Almighty to perfection. But we must believe the *truth* of it, as necessarily implied in WHAT GOD IS: An infinite Being, to whom all things are all at once; and whose *one* apprehension, as in him, comprehends all that is *apprehensible*. This must prove a matter full of endless and unsurmountable difficulties, in all endeavours for having it accommodated to our reason; yet these are only difficulties *above our reason*. But an opposite state of the case must be *against all reason*: As it would mean a reckoning of God to be, at once, a *finite* as well as *infinite* Being; while it is only a finite Being, confined to times and places,—to whom any things can be really *matters of futurity*, and not *matters of fact*.

III. *About the Perfection of the Redeemed in the state of eternal Glory.* Period II. Sect. II. § V.

The Author hath said, concerning this perfection, “when
“ *that which is perfect is come*, it must exclude all existence,
“ with

“with all ideas, of any varieties or vicissitudes for ever.” And this he said, in opposition to what “variety and vicissitude is essential to any happiness that we can enjoy or conceive of on earth.” Such doctrine therefore, about the eternal happiness of the redeemed, can only mean an exclusion of all improvements or alterations in their heavenly state,—from being either expected or desired, or even imagined for ever: In opposition to that sort of variety and vicissitude, in which one thing must succeed unto and supersede another thing, for some new or further article of happiness; as necessarily belonging to the nature of happiness in this world.—Let a man have an absolute choice of such temporal happiness as could lie in any one agreeable thing; it would be turned into a state of misery by the very idea of being absolutely and for ever confined to it, never allowed to give it up for a moment in turning to something else.

Men cannot rest at any one point, in the circle of life; it soon becomes an object of disgust as to continuance in it, so that they must turn about to some other point: And this is owing to the imperfection of all earthly happiness, which men are seeking every where,—but can find it no where in perfection.

But it appears very absurd to suppose, that such will be the nature of the happiness of the redeemed in heaven; that they will have to turn to any thing, from a disgust at continuing as they are. It is quite inconsistent with their being advanced to the highest perfection which their natures are capable of,—that they should have to go round in any circle, or advance in any line, on a search of new or further happiness. Nor is there any inconsistency of this, with the variety of exercises ascribed to them in heaven. For all these must be but one complex exercise and entertainment; in all which they have *already attained*, and are *already perfect*: Without ever having to seek relief in any other thing, from a disgust at being confined to one; like the varieties and vicissitudes which men find necessary in this world.

ADAM GIB.

EDINBURGH; }
Sept. 14. 1787. }

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